

ALEXANDER THE GREAT IN HIS WORLD

CAROL G. THOMAS

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Alexander the Great in his World

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Carol G. Thomas

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BLACKWELL PUBLISHING
350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5020, USA
9600 Garsington Road, Oxford OX4 2DQ, UK
550 Swanston Street, Carlton, Victoria 3053, Australia

First published 2007 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd

1 2007

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Thomas, Carol G., 1938–
Alexander the Great in his world / Carol G. Thomas.
p. cm. — (Blackwell ancient lives)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN-13: 978-0-631-23245-2 (hardback : alk. paper)
ISBN-10: 0-631-23245-1 (hardback : alk. paper)
ISBN-13: 978-0-631-23246-9 (pbk. : alk. paper)
ISBN-10: 0-631-23246-X (pbk. : alk. paper)
1. Alexander, the Great, 356–323 B.C. 2. Greece—History—Macedonian Expansion, 359–323 B.C. 3. Greece—Kings and rulers—Biography. 4. Generals—Greece—Biography. I. Title. II. Series.

DF234.T47 2007
938′.07092—dc22

2006006914

A catalogue record for this title is available from the British Library.

Set in 11.5 on 13.5 pt Bembo
by SNP Best-set Typesetter Ltd, Hong Kong
Printed and bound in Singapore
by Markono Print Media Pte Ltd

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Preface

Teachers and writers of ancient Mediterranean history are drawn, if not willingly then by the interests of their students and readers, to the subject of Alexander III of Macedon. People have an ardent desire to know as much as possible about this man who altered the course of history in his brief lifetime. He has held a prominent place in courses of mine and I admit to two minor publications examining particular aspects of his career. However, I do not belong to the cadre of Alexander specialists nor was it my intent to write an account of his career and nature. That is, it was not even a latent plan until serendipity intervened.

A few years ago, I made the acquaintance of Al Bertrand, now senior commissioning editor at Blackwell Publishing, in the course of appraising several proposals for possible publications. Some dealt with Macedonian matters, which eventually provoked a question from Al to me. Might I think of an interesting new approach for a biography of Alexander for the Blackwell biography series? His question asked for suggestions not authors. A fascinating orientation would be the examination of Alexander's career from the Persian perspective, but since sources for this approach were even more limited than Greek and Roman sources for Alexander, that avenue was not pursued.

Having exhausted more traditional possibilities, I mentioned a direction that I regularly follow in my own area of research,

pre- and proto-historical Greece, where the nature of evidence makes an understanding of the larger context essential. Would an examination of the world into which Alexander was born and raised provide insight into the nature of the person himself? I had followed this path in my seminars titled "Alexander's Conquests: Why?" in which students investigated a variety of "explanations" for Alexander's success: his Macedonian identity, the nature of Macedonia itself, membership in the royal line, the parentage of Philip and Olympias, relations with neighboring peoples, the condition of the Persian Empire during his lifetime. Perhaps, I suggested to Al, someone might employ such an approach for a Blackwell biography.

About two weeks later, Al invited me to write a concise biography of Alexander for us around the theme of my course. While the invitation was flattering I demurred on the grounds that I am not an "Alexander-specialist." Al's rebuttal was that it might be an advantage to come to the subject without a fixed idea of Alexander's motives, character, wishes, and dreams.

This study, therefore, comes with an apologia to all who are "Alexander-specialists," whose research and publications are essential to any understanding of Alexander III of Macedon. It seeks to look deeply into the circumstances of his world in the belief that we cannot understand individuals apart from the cultures that condition their lives. It does not engage in source criticism nor is it an attempt to solve specific issues of fact or interpretation.

Conforming to other books in this series, there are no footnotes but all the works mentioned are given in the bibliography. Citations such as VII.56 from Herodotos refer to classical authors for whom no edition need be cited, since the citation provides information for readers to find the source of quotations in any edition. References to scholarly collections of evidence, such as *IG* II^2, are cited in fuller form parenthetically in the text.

It has been an exciting adventure both to read the evidence with a different aim and to explore the land of Alexander's birth from the Pindos mountain range in the west to the Thermaic Bay and beyond in the east. Travel under the expert guidance of Theo

Antikas and Laura Wynn Antikas yielded essential new insights about how the land of Macedonia was at once a subject and a source for conquest. Their knowledge of the region and of scholars working to enhance evidence of Macedonia's past opened many doors, intellectual as well as physical. The illustrations owe much to their friendships with present-day inhabitants of the land of Alexander, as the credits will reveal.

The assistance of many people has been essential. Theo Antikas read the manuscript three times, providing welcome suggestions and corrections. My husband and colleague, Richard Rigby Johnson, was the photographer of our Macedonian adventure. Lance Jenott, currently a doctoral student at Princeton University, created the maps. Ryan Boehler, a doctoral student in ancient history, made some changes to those maps and prepared many of the illustrations. My colleague and friend Daniel Waugh donated his considerable expertise and time to editing a majority of the illustrations. A grant from the Royalty Research Fund of the University of Washington provided a quarter of release from teaching in which to investigate the land of Macedonia and to devote time to research and writing. I am indebted again to my co-author of two books who has provided the index, an activity that he genuinely enjoys and does consummately. Al Bertrand and others at Blackwell Publishing have been helpful and tolerant throughout the entire process.

Introduction

In the world of ancient Greece, two subjects have drawn exceptional attention from antiquity to the present – Homer and Alexander III of Macedon. It is valuable to recall their connection: Alexander claimed descent from Achilles and he was reported to have slept with a copy of the *Iliad* – as well as his sword, of course – within reach. The subjects are linked in another way, one that helps to explain their attraction through the ages: both present serious questions, many of which seem to be unanswerable given the nature of the surviving evidence. Learning the true identity of Homer or of Alexander may be impossible. It has been argued that Homer was a title, not the name of a real person: rather Homer is the imaginary first epic singer imaged for themselves of all singers of Greek epic. Thus there were many "Homers" whose tales were eventually collected into a single long poem. Many are not convinced by this argument, however, and so debate continues. Difficulty in discovering the true nature of Alexander is due to the nature of surviving evidence that endows him with multiple, different characters. Although the reality of an individual known as Alexander III of Macedon is not in doubt, we are confronted with many Alexanders. Consequently, scholarly debate regarding both Homer and Alexander has deep roots and has provoked heated discussion.

The subject of this study is Alexander, thus only marginally does Homer enter the story. So we are spared from plunging into the spider's web known as "the Homeric Question." "The Alexander Question" is formidable enough. Nor is it only a scholarly concern. So powerful is his image that it is explored for popular audiences in seemingly countless books, articles, comic strips, documentaries, and full-length films, the most recent – *Alexander* directed by Oliver Stone – costing hundreds of millions of dollars to produce. Surely other films will appear in the attempt to discover the true Alexander. As a result a great many different images of the Macedonian king exist already and continue to proliferate.

This situation is at first difficult to understand since we know the names of 20 contemporaries who published accounts about him. However, much of the problem stems from the fact the accounts themselves have not survived. A portion of only one contemporary work has been attached to a later account: the official report of the admiral of Alexander's fleet that sailed back from India into the Persian Gulf survives in the fuller account of Alexander's life written by Arrian in the late second century CE. The rest of the major surviving works date to the first century BCE and the first and second centuries CE, thus postdating Alexander's death by three or more centuries. Materials from other, now lost, works also found their way into the later accounts. Alexander's officer and friend Ptolemaios wrote an account of his commander before his own death in 283 which was regarded as one of two major, and reputedly reliable, sources for Arrian. Unfortunately, the apparent quality of many of the other original works was not equally high, explaining why they were not preserved. Of one of them, the Roman orator/statesman Cicero said "his subject matter was just as bad as his manner of speech." For example, in clarifying why Artemis' temple burned on the very day that Alexander was born, the writer of the account despised by Cicero reminded his readers that Artemis was away from her temple, aiding the birth of this special infant.

As Lionel Pearson revealed in his study of these "lost histories," the surviving accounts mingle summaries of earlier accounts with

later material. Consequently Pearson stresses the need to sort new additions from the older material as well as to attempt to determine which author is responsible for specific parts of the story. No unanimous verdict arises from the process of sorting and attribution. Thus one modern scholar, W. W. Tarn, may assign the "reliable" Ptolemaios as a source while another will disagree with that attribution, having determined that one of the "unreliable" accounts has supplied the information. Such discrepancy will influence the picture that emerges because the reasonableness of a reconstruction obviously depends on the reliability of the evidence.

It is not merely factual data about the main subject that is controversial; indeed, it is possible to assemble a generally uncontested chronology of the basic dates and events in Alexander's short life. However, such was his accomplishment that we want to know about his motives, goals, feelings – in short, the inner being and personality which turned the lives of millions in new directions after ending the lives of millions of others. It is precisely in this respect that the sources fail us. Alexander has been viewed by a major modern scholar as a dreamer hoping to affect the brotherhood of mankind, and by Plutarch, who lived in the late first and early second centuries CE, as the greatest of philosophers. Strong cases have been made for just the opposite characterization: for some, Alexander excelled as the butcher of millions of people, and the picture of his generally acclaimed superlative generalship is tarnished by another view of him as an inebriate. He is thought to have seen himself as a Homeric hero or perhaps the son of Zeus, or he may have been impelled by his mother's designs or his own narcissism. Friendship is seen as the key to his success by some, while others believe that he simply used and discarded people according to whim mixed with anger. Some have argued that Alexander knew the wisdom of adopting Persian customs once he had defeated the Persian forces, while counterarguments state that he truly saw himself as an Oriental monarch. He set out (1) to continue his father's plans or (2) to avenge the Greeks on the Persians or (3) because he was driven by the longing of an explorer. These are just

a handful of assessments but they demonstrate the correctness of C. Bradford Welles' confession (in his review of F. Schachermeyr's *Alexander der Grosse, Ingenium und Macht*, *American Journal of Archaeology* 55 (1951) 433–6): "It is honest to confess that, in the last instance, we make of Alexander what we want or think reasonable."

It seems to me that there is room for another approach to this problematic young man who was described concisely and extremely well by Will Cuppy in his *The Decline and Fall of Practically Everybody*: "Just what this distressing young man thought he was doing, and why, I really can't say. I doubt if he could have clarified the subject to any appreciable extent. He had a habit of knitting his brows. And no wonder" (p. 48).

Like Cuppy, but unlike some who have found a secret key to his inner being, I admit that I cannot say what Alexander thought he was doing. On the other hand, there are means for understanding the person that Alexander came to be and the manner in which he dealt with his circumstances. A good deal is known about his world; the fourth century BCE is well documented in written accounts and by surviving archaeological evidence. This is in part because the turbulent events of Alexander's lifetime drew comments and in part because the Greek and Persian civilizations had become highly literate by comparison with earlier periods. Yet although available this kind of evidence is limited. Fortunately, there are other doors to the past. People are born into particular social and material environments and, as children, they are educated by their society and learn its values and traditions. With advancing maturity, individuals must begin to cope with their world and to learn strategies that are likely to succeed given the institutions of that group and its social and physical environments. To be sure, humans possess a biological, genetic inheritance that defines certain of their individual physical and mental attributes, or explains the lack of them. Consequently, there is opportunity for individual intentionality but even that intentionality is affected – although not necessarily absolutely determined – by forces that are external to the individual. Surviving material evidence can provide information about those

environments. In the case of Macedonia the archaeological record and knowledge of the physical nature of the kingdom during Alexander's lifetime is always growing and at no time more so than in the past thirty or so years.

In the belief that this view of the interplay between an individual and his world is correct, consideration of the role of the constituent forces at work in the centuries when Macedon developed into the kingdom that Alexander knew and ruled will bring us closer to Alexander himself. We may never gain entrance into the workings of his mind, but we will understand the factors that gave rise to his remarkable career. Following a brief synopsis of the basic chronology of his life, the chapters of this book will treat six major forces that shaped that life.

We will begin with Macedonia, where he was born and raised. The physical conditions of the region determined the nature of life possible within it. It was, according to the ancient view of territorial differences, a "hard" rather than a "soft" country. Thus its inhabitants were likely to be strong not weak. Consideration of natural resources can extend an understanding of the role of Macedonia vis-à-vis others. Were there resources that drew others to the region? If so, what relationships developed between Macedonians and others? Did those resources provide an internal advantage to would-be players in the larger Aegean and eastern Mediterranean spheres either in the role of trade partners or as conquerors?

The population of Macedonia is a second aspect of the significance of Macedonia in Alexander's life. Who were the ancient Macedonians? What sort of neighbors did the Macedonians find on their borders? How did the various groups of people relate to one another; that is, did propinquity produce cultural borrowings, ongoing hostility, fusion of once-independent groups? It is known that Alexander's father created a unified kingdom stretching from the Adriatic across the northern Aegean into the lands on the northern coast of the Black Sea and along the Danube. How these lands were drawn into this kingdom is yet another factor operating in the world into which Alexander was born and raised to manhood. The

process of Philip's unification reveals "tools" required by the would-be unifier that Alexander became on "inheriting" the kingship as well as the tensions that it produced. The nature of life in mid-fourth-century Macedonia, then, establishes two basic parameters in the story of any individual living in the kingdom of Macedon at the time, namely the physical environment and the people who forged a life suited to their location.

Next we will turn to his ancestry, which refocuses attention from Macedonia as a whole to individual Macedonians. Alexander's father, Philip II, was remarkable in his own accomplishments. What inheritance – physical, temperamental, and in particular accomplishments – did he leave to his son? And what of his mother, Olympias, and her own ancestry and character? Did her role as a member of the royal family of the kingdom of Epiros and, later, a wife of the Macedonian king figure prominently in Alexander's shaping? In addition to his parents, it will be valuable to take a wider view of his ancestry, for Alexander was a member of the royal line: he was an Argead. What was expected of a son of a reigning king and how was he trained as potential heir to the kingship? Did problems arise from belonging to the Argead line? If so, what and how serious were they?

The story of ancient Macedon is inextricably tied to that of Greece, initially through geographical proximity that led to cultural borrowings of many types. The nature of that tie is a third major factor in Alexander's world. A description of the interaction from the period of the Persian Wars in the early fifth century grows fuller during the reign of Philip, who drew the Greek states under Macedonian hegemony both militarily and politically. Can his success be explained by factors in addition to Macedonian military might? After all, both Greeks and Macedonians had felt the effects of Persian attempts at expansion into the western Aegean in the late sixth and early fifth centuries. Perhaps a bond of having a common enemy was also instrumental, making "avenging" the Greeks on the Persians a joint effort of that official union. Culturally as well, the interaction between Greece and Macedon was significant. One

specific aspect of this cultural influence on Alexander came through his tutor, the philosopher Aristotle of the Greek polis of Stageira in the northern Aegean. Does an understanding of Alexander's contact with the Greek polymath lend insights into the nature of Alexander himself?

The necessity of military strength figures prominently in relations with others, but it also deserves consideration on its own in chapter 5 especially because the integrity of the kingdom demanded an effective, constantly vigilant military force. What are the underpinnings of the kingdom with respect to the social structure of Macedon, the organization of its army, and requisites for military success? How did the Macedonian king figure in the military structure of his kingdom?

Macedon and Greece both witnessed directly the power of the Persian Empire, whose king, as reported by Herodotos, was so mighty that one ordinary human exclaimed of Xerxes "Why, Zeus, did you take the form of a Persian man and the name of Xerxes in place of Zeus in order to destroy Greece, leading all these men? You could have done this without these efforts" (VII.56). Why would a king of Macedon have any expectation of defeating such a powerful ruler of the largest empire yet created in the history of the ancient Near East? An answer to this question must include knowledge of the territorial and administrative structure of that empire and the condition of that structure in the mid-fourth century. How well did the Macedonian kings know the nature of Persia? Did the two realms possess certain similarities that would facilitate an understanding of one another? Inasmuch as Alexander did succeed in defeating the Persians, the force of Persian tradition on Alexander became another factor in his world.

On the basis of an understanding of the conditions, forces, and institutions in the Aegean during the fifth and fourth centuries BCE it is possible to form a clearer picture of Alexander III of Macedon, known from antiquity as Alexander the Great. The final chapter will consist of a "portrait" of that person: how did Macedonia, his Argead ancestry, interaction with Greece, the military momentum of the

original kingdom, and relations with the Persian Empire mold both the man and his career? Although it might be argued that deviating from those influences was precisely what made him "great," it will become obvious that he could not purposefully or unconsciously abandon his inheritance. At the same time he was not a passive player in his world. He used his inherited position in circumstances that no previous Argead had experienced. Yet, without the tools and situation presented to the young man on his acclamation as successor to Philip II, he would not have won his epithet.

1
Basic Facts, Generally Uncontested, of Alexander's Life

Although the nature of evidence on Alexander III of Macedon makes it difficult, if not impossible, to discover his inner being, there is sufficient agreement among the ancient sources to sketch a biography of his life with a fair degree of certainty about major events and their dates.

The basic sources on Alexander differ in several important respects: they extend from Alexander's own lifetime into the second century CE; their authors have varied purposes for writing the accounts; most are incomplete, some existing only as scattered fragments in other sources; and the testimony they give often disagrees with other sources. The main cause of this ongoing disagreement is the nature of surviving sources: the earliest attested accounts are lost or, at best, preserved only in scanty fragments while those that have survived are late, often conflict with one another, and carry their own agendas.

But some sources do exist and the patient, hard work of scholars has determined the earlier materials upon which the later authors relied. This "genealogy" in turn provides readers with an understanding of the reliability – or lack of it – of the several accounts. The fullest account, for example, relied on two of Alexander's companions while another author is accused of writing fiction. Comparison of the accounts has shown points of agreement as well

as disagreement among them, thus providing something resembling a common position on certain aspects of Alexander's career.

The main extant sources range in date from the late fourth century BCE to the second century CE. The earliest is the official report by Nearchos of the sea journey from the mouth of the Indos River to the Persian Gulf. A Cretan by birth, Nearchos came to Amphipolis in Macedonia during the reign of Philip II. A sensible view is that he was one of the older advisors of the young Alexander. During Alexander's kingship, he was given important commands, for example as satrap of Lykia and Pamphylia, but the assignment which he recorded was as admiral of the naval reconnaissance from southern India to the head of the Persian Gulf. The account survives since it provided the basis for Arrian's later report known as the *Indika*.

Diodoros Sikulos' universal history – the *Bibliotheke* in 40 books – recounted events reaching back to the origins of the world and extending to his own time, 60 BCE. Only 15 of the books survive but, fortunately for scholars of Macedonia, books 16 and 17, which treat Philip and Alexander, are among the surviving portions.

The work of Curtius Rufus on Alexander dates to the first or early second century CE. Of the original ten books, the first two are lost and there are gaps in the preserved portions. The surviving portion treats events to Alexander's distribution of governorships in 324 BCE. While some scholars have called for a proper reassessment of the source, a general appraisal of its merits is that of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (second edition, p. 416): "There is little consistency . . . and the exigencies of rhetoric determine the selection of source material. Consequently he switches arbitrarily from source to source and sometimes blends them into a senseless farrago. He has often been accused of deliberate fiction."

Roughly contemporary with Curtius Rufus was Mestrius Plutarch, from Boiotian Chaironeia in central Greece where, in fact, Philip and his Macedonians defeated the Greek force in 338 BCE. His dates are c. 50 to 120 CE. During his lifetime he wrote prolifically; a later catalogue lists 227 works by Plutarch. One of the best

known is his "Parallel Lives" of 23 pairs of great men, one of each pair Greek, the other Roman. Among them is a *Life of Alexander*, paired with the *Life of Julius Caesar*. Plutarch also composed, perhaps early in his writing career, a piece "On the Fortune of Alexander," which is included with his *Moralia*. W. W. Tarn, a noted scholar of Alexander in the mid-twentieth century, described the difference in the two works: "Plutarch in youth had written Part I of the *De Alexandri Fortuna* with all the fervour of a young man bent on righting what he considered to be a great wrong; but by the time that the elderly Plutarch, with his comfortable sinecure at Delphi, wrote Alexander's *Life*, the fire had burnt low and was half swamped by his much reading" (1948: 296f).

Marcus Iunianius Iustinus – or Justin – is variously dated to the second, third, or fourth century CE. His contribution to Alexander scholarship is in the form of an epitome of the longer, earlier study of Pompeius Trogus, *The Philippic Histories* in 44 books. Of this product, Tarn stated, "But Trogus' – or perhaps one should call it Justin's – Alexander is so hopelessly bad that, except on one point, it is hardly worth considering sources at all" (1948: 122).

By contrast, the second-century study by Arrian – Lucius Flavius Arrianus – survives in virtually complete form and it is generally regarded as the most reliable of the surviving accounts. Two of Arrian's sources are credited with the reliability. First, he drew on the record of Aristobulos, who accompanied Alexander on campaign as a technical expert. Consequently many details such as ship and bridge construction reflect his non-military interests. The second source is that of Alexander's friend and successor, Ptolemaios, who also participated in the campaign. It is reasonable to believe that Ptolemaios composed his account late in his own career (he died in 283 BCE) after consolidating control of his Egyptian kingdom. Equally important in judging the merits of Arrian's *Anabasis of Alexander* is his intent to ground his historical writing in the tradition of the trio of classical Greek historians, Herodotos, Thukydides, and Xenophon.

Remnants from many once extant sources on Alexander survive. The campaign had an official historian, Kallisthenes, who was a

pupil and relative of Aristotle. When Kallisthenes fell out of favor with Alexander, his role as recorder also ended. It is known that Alexander's chamberlain, Chares of Mytilene, wrote "stories" of Alexander in 10 books, as did others including Onesicritos, a philosopher, who participated in the sea voyage with Nearchos. Philip as well as Alexander attracted considerable attention. A Macedonian historian named Marsyas of Pella is credited with a history of Macedonia in 10 books as well as a treatise "On the Education of Alexander." Debate persists about the existence of a number of other accounts, ranging from an account of Greek mercenaries serving with the Persian king, to a "will" of Alexander, to fragments of a "day-book" (*ephemeris*) of the campaign itself. To compound the problem, some 80 versions of the Alexander "romance" in 24 languages exist. In these legends, Alexander is remembered as the ancestor of the Malay royal family, as a dragon-slayer, as a man who could converse with trees, as a devotee of the Judeo-Christian God, and in many other guises. There are indeed many Alexanders. Richard Stoneman presents several of these legends. The fragments of lost works have been collected by the German scholar F. Jacoby. Reconciliation of this disparate evidence produces something like the following narrative.

Alexander was born in the summer of 356, the child of Philip II, then king of the Macedonians, and Olympias, whom Philip had married, probably in the previous year. The place of birth was Pella, which had become the major center in Macedonia earlier in the fourth century and now served as the political heart of the kingdom. Alexander's education was guided by various tutors: Leonidas, a relative of Olympias, and a Greek named Lysimachos were important forces in his early years, and when Alexander was in his early teens, the Greek philosopher Aristotle was engaged to foster the intellectual maturity of Alexander along with several boyhood companions and friends. The pupils and their tutor lived apart from Pella in a location known as the Nymphaion, or place of the Nymphs. Clues exist to shed some light on the subjects of Aristotle's instruction; we will examine the likely subjects in chapter

4. Other essential knowledge came, both directly and indirectly, from Alexander's parents, a subject for the third chapter. That much of this knowledge was physical training is illustrated nicely in Alexander's ability to tame a wild stallion that older, seasoned men could not even mount. The horse, named Bucephalas, became his tamer's special steed, traveling with Alexander to the Indos, where he died. Other training included all the skills needed by the son of the king who was Philip's potential successor. Evidence that he was a good student is clear in his father's judgment that, at age 16, Alexander was competent to govern Macedon in Philip's absence (340) and, two years later, that he was qualified to command the left wing of the Macedonian army at Chaironeia. Under the joint command of Philip and Alexander, the Macedonian force decisively defeated the Greeks (338). The following year was marred by a serious quarrel between father and son on the occasion of Philip's marriage to his seventh wife, Kleopatra, so serious that Alexander and his mother left Pella for her native kingdom of Epiros. A reconciliation effected in 336 brought them back to Macedonia, the year in which Philip II was assassinated.

The year 336, then, inaugurated the reign of Alexander. Other possible successors among the Argead line also had a claim to rule: another son of Philip II, and Philip's nephew, who, as an infant in 359, had been incapable of confronting the turmoil created by his own father's death. By contrast, Alexander in 336 had demonstrated his ability sufficiently to be acclaimed by the army assembly and to secure the support of his father's officers and friends, both vital to the award of kingship. His reign of some 13 years began with uprisings north of Macedonia as well as in Greece, each region remembering its former independent status. In 335, the army led by Alexander was campaigning in what is modern Albania when he was recalled to deal with a revolt in central Greece, at Thebes. When Thebes was taken and sacked, the rest of Greece resubmitted to the Macedonian hegemony that had been won by Philip. The goal of the League of Corinth, founded by Philip after his victory at Chaironeia, could now be executed: members of the League had

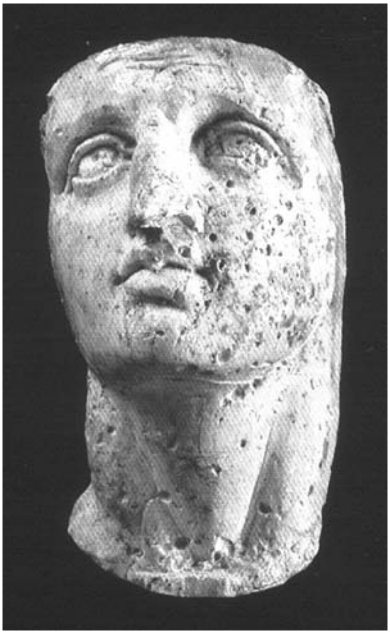


Figure 1.1 Ivory head from the decoration of the chryselephantine bier in the main chamber of Royal Tomb II at Vergina, thought to be Alexander III. Courtesy of Mrs Olympia Andronikou-Kakoulidou

agreed to an offensive and defensive alliance under the leadership of the Macedonian king with the specific goal of a campaign against Persia. In fact, Philip had sent an advance force to Asia Minor. After securing Greece and his northern borders, Alexander could turn to the larger campaign that his father had set in motion, namely the operation against the Persians.

Much of the foundation for the campaign was in place. Thus, after naming Antipatros – one of his father's senior officers – as regent, Alexander led his force of some 30,000 infantry and 5,000 horse across the Dardanelles in the spring of 334. His first destination was not a battle site to challenge Persian control of Asia Minor but the legendary battle site of Troy. Although a surprising choice

in the eyes of modern students of Alexander, it was a natural decision for a descendant of Achilles who was undertaking revenge for the Persian attempt to control Macedonia and Greece. Next, however, the Macedonians did challenge Persian control of Asia Minor in battle at the River Granikos. The Persian force was commanded not by its king but by satrap governors of Anatolia. There is no doubt concerning the outcome: a substantial Macedonian victory opened the door to Anatolia. Sardis, the westernmost Persian capital, surrendered and Alexander pursued the pacification of the region for the remainder of the year and much of the following year. In autumn of 333, he pressed forward, leaving another of Philip's senior officers, Antigonos, in command of the on-going consolidation of Macedonian control of Anatolia.

The two armies met again at Issos in northern Syria, and in this encounter the Persian force, reputed to be 600,000 strong, was commanded by their king, Dareios III. While such a size is highly dubious, the Macedonians were outnumbered. However, the greater numbers of Persians proved "useless for want of space" (Arrian II.8.11). After the Macedonian victory in the field, Dareios managed to escape but his family, traveling with him, was taken captive. To secure their release, Dareios offered to cede Persian territory west of the Euphrates. Alexander replied in two ways: refusing the offer and beginning the conquest of Syria-Palestine. Many cities surrendered to the Macedonians; some were taken with little difficulty; but a siege of seven months was necessary to take impregnable Tyre, a vital location for control of naval power. When Tyre proved pregnable after all, Alexander and his force continued south to Gaza, the last town in southern Phoenicia, which, like Tyre, was well walled, requiring a counter-mound 250 feet (75 m) high, siege engines, and tunneling under its wall to take it.

Following the capture of the town and the death or enslavement of its inhabitants, the Macedonians continued to the westernmost region of the Persian Empire, Egypt, arriving in late autumn of 332. Change of overlordship required no battle. For some months, Alexander was occupied with administrative matters, laying plans for

the establishment of a new capital – Alexandria – and, in another surprising excursion, he trekked some 370 miles (600 km) through the western desert to consult the famous oracle of Ammon. Unlike the outcome of battles, a great deal of debate centers on the reason for this long, difficult trek as well as on the question posed by Alexander and the answer given by the oracle. Did he in fact learn that his true father was not Philip but Ammon-Zeus? We will return to this issue and other similar actions in the final chapter.

Spring of 331 found Alexander back in Syria continuing with matters of the administration of his expanding realm before proceeding toward Mesopotamia. Crossing both the Euphrates and Tigris rivers without opposition, he rested his troops in preparation for the forthcoming battle that the Persians were mounting. That battle, fought in the autumn at Gaugamela in northern Mesopotamia, was a massive effort on the part of the Persians: the Macedonians may have been outnumbered by as much as six times. However, neither numbers nor scythed chariots, deployed to cause chaos among the Macedonian troops, won the day. Although King Dareios again escaped, Macedonian victory secured the Persian treasure at the city near the battle site and opened a route through Mesopotamia, and then to the Persian capitals east of the Tigris. Babylon surrendered and Susa followed suit. After making official appointments and effecting some reorganization of his army, Alexander marched southeast toward the Persian capitals of Persepolis and Pasargadai. The former was protected by a satrap with a force of 40,000 infantry (Arrian III.18.2), strategically stationed to block Macedonian progress. Capture of the city required circumventing the enemy by traveling through difficult terrain. Pasargadai demanded no similar effort. Both yielded great wealth in the form of treasure but also in access to the center of Persian power. Alexander could claim the throne of the Achaemenid royal family. At Persepolis, he dismissed the Greek contingent from further participation in the mission of the League of Corinth, and then burned the city. It is another action that requires knowledge of Alexander's own thoughts and passions, and since we do not know his inner being, the reason for the destruction is hotly debated.

Alexander then began the pursuit of Dareios, moving northward to Media. While asserting Macedonian control of Media, he learned that Dareios had passed through the Caspian Gates en route to the eastern regions of the Persian Empire. When the Macedonians reached the south Caspian region, they discovered that Dareios had been killed by those traveling with the former Persian king. Alexander pressed eastward in the summer of 330, in pursuit of new claimants to the kingship and, presumably, to conquer the remaining territories of the empire.

The first goal proved more elusive than the second. As the Macedonian force made its way through the eastern satrapies in 330 and 329, many of the satraps offered their submission but others fought on. Only in 328 was Bessos – the first declared successor to Dareios – executed. The second declared successor – Spitamenes – continued to gather troops to struggle against the Macedonians for another half year or so. Alexander and his troops persisted in the pacification and settlement of Sogdiana and Bactria for another year, to summer of 327.

The three years are notable for more than the extension of Macedonian control and the elimination of claimants to the Persian throne other than Alexander himself. He finally made the decision to marry; he chose as his first wife Roxane, the daughter of a Sogdian lord, Oxyartes. Roxane, together with the wife and other daughters of Oxyartes, had been taken in a successful siege, and while the decision to marry her served to gain her father's support, it is also reported that she was the second loveliest women in all of Asia, surpassed only by the wife of Dareios III, and upon seeing her, Alexander loved her.

A far less happy but equally significant result was that the Macedonians began to express hostility to their king, both individually and, perhaps, in the form of conspiracies. Parmenion, one of Alexander's senior officers and Philip's choice to lead the advance force to Asia Minor in 337, was implicated in a reputed conspiracy of his son Philotas, also a significant figure in Alexander's entourage. Learning of a plot against him, Alexander had Philotas summoned before the army assembly. Philotas defended himself against charges

of involvement but was found guilty of not reporting a conspiracy to Alexander although he and Alexander were in daily contact. Philotas and other conspirators were killed by javelins thrown by the Macedonians. Another companion of Alexander was dispatched with orders to the generals left in Media to put Parmenion to death, on the grounds that Philotas' father had either been involved in the conspiracy or, if not, was a potential lightning rod of anger against the king because he and his family were held in high regard by both Macedonian and mercenary soldiers.

In the following year, Kleitos the Black, who is reported by the surviving sources to have saved Alexander's life at the battle of the Granikos River, was killed during the course of a symposium at which the drinking was long-lasting. As Alexander was being flattered by his companions, Kleitos reminded the company that the aid of other Macedonians had been vital. A shouting match ended with Alexander seizing a spear or a pike from a guard and slaying the man who had been his guardian during the battle at the Granikos. The same year saw another alleged conspiracy, on this occasion raised by a number of Alexander's young pages. The official historian of the campaign, Kallisthenes, was implicated; he had fallen out of favor with Alexander both for suggesting that praise of the king should be tempered and for refusing to prostrate himself before Alexander in the Persian fashion that had recently been introduced by Alexander. The allegation of conspiracy resulted in the death of Kallisthenes either by stoning, by hanging, or by sickness resulting from being led about in fetters as the army proceeded.

Having solved, at least in the short term, internal Macedonian issues and achieved nominal control of much of the eastern region of the Persian Empire, Alexander prepared to march even further eastward – into India. In the eastern satrapies of the now largely vanquished Persian Empire, new settlements were established in some profusion. There were several new Alexandrias (at Phrada, Heart, Kandahar, Ghazni, Merv, and Termiz as well as on the Caucasus and on the Jaxartes) and Bactra was refounded as an Alexandria. Additionally, garrisons were established at Kyropolis and

in the region between Kyropolis and the northern terminus of the campaign at the Jaxartes River.

With a line of communications in place, in the summer of 327, a force of some 35,000 made its way across the Hindu Kush into the Indos River valley. At the River Hydaspes, the defeat of the force of the Indian king Poros in 326 opened an entrance to the vast subcontinent. Proceeding eastward, the Macedonian force reached the Hyphasis River – the easternmost of the great system of rivers – where yet another Macedonian reaction surfaced: Alexander's men refused to continue (one calculation, by Count York von Wartenburg, estimates that the Macedonians had traveled 12,000 miles – over 19,000 km – in eight and a half years) and he was forced to agree to return to the west. Back-tracking to the Hydaspes, where a fleet was under construction, the force made its way southward both by land and by sea, reaching the Indos delta in the summer of 325. Alexander laid the foundations of the administration of the newly acquired territory and then organized the return. A portion of the force continued to travel by sea with the goal of exploring the route from the mouth of the Indos to the mouths of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in the Persian Gulf. One segment of the land force was to proceed by a route to the north of the Gedrosian Desert, while Alexander led the remainder of the army directly through the desert itself. All three groups experienced severe difficulties, yet the surviving members of two armies rejoined west of the great desert, and the fleet met Alexander just inside the Straits of Hormuz. The fleet continued to sail northward while the army marched toward Pasargadai, which was reached early in 324. In the spring, Alexander moved to the Persian capital of Susa and in the following spring to Babylon.

During the last year and a half of his life, Alexander was more preoccupied with the results of his successful campaign than further campaigning, although sources report that he was planning new expeditions such as sailing around the Arabian peninsula. He also founded more settlements. Of immediate concern were his veterans and the men he had entrusted with pacification and governing, not

all of whom had proved loyal and/or effective. While at Susa, liaisons between many of his soldiers and Asian women – Arrian states they were more than 10,000 – were solemnized through marriage, with Alexander himself providing wedding gifts. He gave another form of gift in paying the debts of the army, to the sum of 20,000 talents. Alexander and his closest companions also married daughters of significant Persian families: Alexander himself married Dareios' eldest daughter and the youngest daughter of a Persian noble from another branch of the Persian royal family. Arrian lists the marriages of Hephaistion, Krateros, Perdikkas, Ptolemaios, Eumenes, Nearchos, and Seleukos, and gives a total of 80 similar unions between other Companions and the noblest daughters of the Persians and Medes.

Yet another union occurred at Susa with the arrival of 30,000 Asian youths who had been trained in the Macedonian fashion. The repercussions of this arrival produced further mutiny on the part of his Macedonian army when Alexander announced that he was discharging a sizeable number of his veterans and sending them home to Macedonia. Many of those to be discharged greeted the announcement with sarcastic anger, shouting that he should release all of the Macedonians and carry on the war with the help of his "true" father, the god Ammon. And they were none too pleased with his new Asian companions. Alexander's first response was to have the most vocal instigators arrested and killed; he harangued the rest, and with the final word "Begone!" marched off. One and all the veterans repented and threw themselves on their king's mercy, and they were reconciled in a grand banquet, after which some 10,000 veterans were willing to return to the kingdom of Macedon under the leadership of one of Alexander's senior generals, Krateros.

An additional acute need was to address administration of the empire Alexander had won. Many of those left in positions of authority seem to have believed that he would not survive his eastern campaign. A number of them were called to account, punished, and replaced. Not simply individuals but entire territories outside the sphere of the former Persian Empire required ordering: Greece in particular. In the late 330s, the Spartan king Agis

combined the goal of restoring Sparta's power with a second goal of removing Macedonian control of Greece. To accomplish these ends, he succeeded in raising an infantry of 20,000 together with 10 ships and funds from Persia. In Athens, a professional soldier holding the office of *strategos* (general) was busy raising a coalition against the Macedonians in 324. Even further distant, delegations from Mediterranean and European peoples are reported to have sought out this surprising young conqueror.

Death intervened to shorten and confuse these efforts. First came the death of the man who had become his closest friend and aide – Hephaistion – in late 324, causing Alexander immense grief. Soon, in late spring of 323, Alexander himself was struck by a fever; he succumbed in June (the thirteenth of the month is generally accepted) shortly before his thirty-third birthday.

Alexander III of Macedon was a remarkable person in his own lifetime; his accomplishments endowed him with the title Alexander the Great in antiquity, a title that is regularly associated with his name. He has been a hero to many would-be emulators, from his own successors, to the second-century CE Roman Emperor Trajan, to Napoleon Bonaparte, who wrote "Alexander conquered three hundred thousand Persians, with twenty thousand Macedonians. I had a particular success in daring enterprises." Historian F. A. Wright's description of Alexander may hold claim to be the most magnificent: stating that Alexander, Julius Caesar, Charles the Great, and Napoleon were "so superior to the ordinary level of human capacity, they can hardly be judged by common standards," Wright asserted that in his work and his character Alexander "is entitled to the first place" (1934: 1).

For such a person we yearn for more than a few dates and events. What drove him? What were his true goals? What were his thoughts, his reactions, his fears – if he had any such non-heroic emotions? These are the sorts of questions Alexander inspires and for which no clear answers are possible. By looking at his world, however, we will move closer to an understanding.

2
Being Macedonian

A view that a culture's location determines its character is associated with the name of Hippokrates, the renowned physician of antiquity who lived in the fifth century BCE. Among the large number of writings associated with his name is a study entitled *Airs, Waters and Places* that associates human health with an individual's diet, environment, and way of life. The author maintains that the differing characteristics of Asian and European peoples are linked to climate: the absence of major changeable climatic conditions in Asia produces a soft people while the more volatile extremes of Europe mold a tough people. Aristotle argued along similar lines in the fourth century (*Politics* VII, 7, 1327b20f): Asian peoples are intelligent but lack spirit while Europeans are spirited although of less native intelligence. Most fortunate were those situations between the two extremes. For Aristotle and Hippokrates the Greeks occupied the middle position and, hence, were both highly intelligent and spirited. In many respects, however, Macedonians have even greater claim to a fortunate, middle-ground position. In fact, a tale that Hippokrates diagnosed King Perdikkas II of Macedon (454–413) would, if true, indicate that Hippokrates had experienced the environment of Macedonia at first hand. Certainly Aristotle was well acquainted with Macedonia and Macedonians, having been raised as a child at the capital of Pella and, later, having served as

tutor to the young Alexander III. Investigation of the physical nature of Macedonia allows us to consider how the natural conditions there would define a way of life for its occupants – Macedonians in general, members of the ruling Argead line, and Alexander III in particular. And in company with Hippokrates and Aristotle, we can then inquire into the people who were shaped by that environment.

The land known as Macedonia has had a variety of configurations over time: its territorial extent is determined largely by the ability of one of the many groups of people in the region to establish control over other groups. From Paleolithic times to the present, the location of the region has drawn diverse people to it whether as migrants through it, immigrants seeking a place to settle, traders, or would-be conquerors. However, the geographical configuration of the region inhibits widespread unity, encouraging rather smaller regional unifications of population. Even in the twenty-first century CE, regionalism persists.

In general terms, Macedonia is the transitional region between the Greek peninsula and the European continent. In comparison with those two neighboring regions, its climate and configuration resemble the northern continent rather than the Mediterranean lands: rainfall is heavier in the winter months, less in the summer; winters are more severe, with snow covering the mountains, while summers, especially in the plains, have higher temperatures, reaching above 40°C (104°F). In the east, Macedonia borders on the Thermaic Gulf of the Aegean Sea, which provides a sizeable coastal plain. However, most of the region generally defined as Macedonia is not coastal. From the plain, two great rivers – the Haliakmon and the Axios and their tributaries – act as routes into the interior: the Haliakmon to the west and dipping south to the border of modern Albania, and the Axios (modern Vardar) reaching north to Skopje and west to the southern boundary of modern Kosovo.

The rivers and the seacoast set recognizable boundaries to the territory in geographical, if not political, terms. What is more, the rivers act as barriers to would-be intruders. For example, the pass of Rendina on the Axios near ancient Amphipolis, where it begins

to descend to the sea, is very narrow and, thus, easily defensible. Similar narrow passes carved by the rivers are found elsewhere, also lessening the work of defense. However, there *are* passes that can be used as points of entry.

A further benefit of the rivers is that they are perennial. In their transit to the sea, they fill lakes that, in turn, provide fish; in some places – as Herodotos reports of Paionia in the north – "the number of them is so great that when a trap door is opened and baskets sink into the rush bed in the lake, after waiting only a short time, one pulls them up full of fish" (V.16.4). Even today the Haliakmon River contains 33 fish species. Beyond providing such an abundance of fish on which horses and other beasts of burden are nourished, rivers are a source of water for consumption and for irrigation even during the summer months; coupled with the snow accumulation on the higher mountains, the abundance of water offers a longer growing season than southern Greece can expect. Herodotos reports that only a single river in the region dried up when the Persian troops tried to satisfy their thirst (VII.127). To appreciate the volume needed, it is important to remember that Herodotos numbered the Persian force at more than five million, though we think the actual numbers were about 250,000, not all of whom were combatants. Moreover, towns and cities located on a tributary have access to the sea along with the advantage of inland security. For instance, Pella, the Macedonian capital during Alexander's reign, was located on a branch of the Loudias River, which was navigable along the approximately twenty miles to the sea.

Mountains are a second defining feature of Macedonia. The majority of the territory that formed the kingdom created by Philip II is over 1,800 feet (600 m); this includes the low-lying region east of the Echedoros (modern Gallikos) River. The extent of the westernmost territory eventually incorporated into the kingdom of Macedon was defined by the long range of the Pindos mountains running through the Balkans down to the Gulf of Corinth. Many of the individual mountain peaks in Macedonia are impressively high, some rivaling, although not surpassing, Mt. Olympos at



Figure 2.1 Upper reaches of the Haliakmon River. Photograph by Richard R. Johnson

9,461 feet (2,917 m): a peak in the Barnous mountains reaches to 8,203 feet (2,524 m), while one in the Babuna range is 8,255 feet (2,540 m). Even though natural clefts in the mountains serve as gateways to the lower-lying plains, they also provide a sturdy natural defense for, as previously noted, some of the clefts are so narrow that they are easily held. And, in parts of the region, the ranges serve as a screen; as Nicholas Hammond described it, the mountains of lower Macedonia west of the Axios provide a "continuous shield" (1972: 162).

Forests were a gift of the mountains: in antiquity, Macedonia had many great forests of both evergreen and deciduous trees, and it is estimated that even today approximately a fifth of the region is forested. Alpine ecosystems prevail near the mountain peaks; lower down the slopes, pine trees grew; oak, fir, and cedar dominated even further down. Timber provided by the forests was not only valuable for domestic use but was also sought by the timber-poor states of Greece. The rivers were used to float harvested timber to the



Figure 2.2 Upper Macedonia. Photograph by Richard R. Johnson

plains, and eventually the coast facilitated transportation to the core of the kingdom, where much of the trade with others was also conducted.

Trees also afford food and shelter for animals; Macedonian trees were no exception in antiquity, when a wide range of wild animals made their home in the forests. Presently, some 32 species of mammals and 108 of birds populate the National Park on Mt. Olympos. A large variety is attested for antiquity as well. Some – like the red deer and roe deer – were not especially dangerous to humans, but others were rightly feared: wild boars, brown bears, wolves, lynxes, panthers, leopards, and lions all inhabited the mountain woodlands. Herodotos recounts the strange experience of the Persians en route to Macedonia in 480 BCE, when lions "leaving their haunts and coming down regularly at night, . . . attacked no other animal nor man, but killed only the camels" (VII.123.3).



Figure 2.3 Deer still haunting upper Macedonia. Photograph by Richard R. Johnson

Domesticated animals also benefited from the mountain ranges, which provided excellent summer pastures for the flocks of sheep and goats. Much of the population of upper Macedonia – that is, northern and western regions – was pastoral from prehistoric times into the fourth century. In haranguing his angry veterans after the return to Mesopotamia, Alexander described their ingratitude for the huge changes his father had brought to the lives of many Macedonians. He inherited them as migrants without resources, most of them clothed in leather skins herding a few sheep on the mountains. Bringing them down from the mountains into the plains, Philip exchanged their skins for cloaks and made them worthy opponents of their barbaric neighbors (Arrian VII.9.2). Although Alexander may have exaggerated the earlier condition, archaeological evidence supports the basic truth of the depiction of life for many of the mountain dwellers, not only in antiquity but also in more recent times. Remembering that by far the majority of Macedonia, especially the upper or western regions, is over 1,800 feet (600 m) in altitude enhances our appreciation of the mountains' role in life in Macedonia.

Mineral resources, too, were abundant. In modern times the region is a source of gold, silver, lead, tin, copper, iron ores, lignite, magnesite, zinc, asbestos, chrome, pyrites, and molybdenum, used for

alloying steel. It is uncertain that all were mined in antiquity; however, both gold and silver were actively produced during the reigns of Philip and Alexander, as well as by their successors, and the quantity and quality of excavated objects of less valuable metals indicates that the inhabitants of Macedonia knew of the resources and developed skills at working them. Metals may well have been a factor in the contact between the Mycenaeans in Bronze Age Greece and Macedonian peoples. Moreover, recent finds from Pydna show that the Greek colonists discovered these mineral resources during the late Dark and Archaic Ages. Another element of the mountains' composition held great value for construction, in the fine marble as well as limestone that they provided for fabrication of fortifications, roads, and buildings.

Interspersed among the mountain ranges are many extensive plains blessed by the rivers and rainfall with fertile soil. Moving westward from the Aegean, a traveler encounters layers of valleys that, while varying in types of vegetation, nonetheless support farming and stock breeding more easily than do the mountain plains of southern Greece. As early as the period of incipient agriculture, Macedonia was found to be especially receptive to the efforts of would-be farmers. In fact, sites in Macedonia and on the island of Crete are the initial regions of settled villages in the western Aegean. Cultivation of two kinds of wheat as well as barley, lentils, peas, and millet is attested from the Neolithic Age. Certainly from the time of Philip and Alexander, if not earlier, grapes were also an important item of Macedonian agriculture. Some, but not many, olive trees survived in the more coastal regions of the territory. In recent times, certain basins could boast of three crops a year. The livelihood of Macedonian peasants in the plains as well as those living in the higher reaches included the care of animals – goats, sheep, pigs, cattle, and horses. The coastal plains are excellent for pasturage of cattle and horses and provide winter pastures for goats and sheep. Horses abandoned by the German army in the final days of its occupation of Greece have managed to survive without human care to the present day along the Axios and Haliakmon rivers.



Figure 2.4 Looking west across the Pindos Range. Photograph by Richard R. Johnson

These expansive plains are separated from one another by the other natural features of the region. The rise and fall of the surface of the land in remote periods produced changes of levels within regions as well as between regions. And the individual plains are split into subdivisions by the rivers or their tributaries that run through them. Three such subdivisions exist in the central plain, which curves round the Thermaic Gulf, and a similar picture characterizes the regions of upper Macedonia. Each region can be self-sufficient thanks to a mixture of upland basins, lakes, forests, rivers, and mountains. In spite of the natural separation, however, the smaller regions are linked in that they belong to main routes that lead from the sea to the central Balkans and to the Adriatic Sea. Here is Hammond's description of one route from Epiros to Macedonia:

> The route from Epiros to Kastoria and so northwards to Lychnidus or eastwards to Macedonia presents no serious difficulties, once the river Aous has been crossed at Mesoyefira; one climbs up to Leskoviq and then winds round spurs and across ravines to enter the small but fertile basis of Ersekë, from which one crosses Mt. Lofka by the pass



Figure 2.5 The Pydna coast along the Thermaic Gulf. Photograph by Richard R. Johnson

> of Qarrë and descends into the plain of Kastoria [roughly half-way between the Adriatic Sea and the Thermaic Gulf of the Aegean]. (1972: 102)

The Roman Via Egnatia, built toward the end of the second century, also demonstrates the possibility of linkage. It followed a trade route that had been a main source of travel in earlier times and, today, is the basis of a modern highway under construction.

Thus, the entire region known as Macedonia can be described as a middle ground. It stands at the node of connections between regions to the north and south, on the one hand, and to the west and the east, on the other. Early humans had entered Greece from Europe and from Anatolia. Clearly the migratory route of the European stock was by land through the Balkans into Macedonia and then southward. Although much of the immigration from Anatolia was by sea, the Neolithic settlements in Macedonia and Thessaly seem to have been accomplished by gradual movement out of Anatolia and across the northern Aegean. The enterprise and



Figure 2.6 Throne of Zeus atop Olympos. Photograph by Richard R. Johnson

products of Mycenaean Greeks in the Bronze Age would push northward into Macedonia, as would the colonizing efforts of mainland Greeks beginning in the ninth and eighth centuries. The incursions of warlike peoples west of the Pindos mountains, which were common in prehistoric times, continued to be all too frequent in the age of Philip and Alexander.

The inviting location of Macedonia to those outside of the region suggested that there might be strength in cooperation. When the subdivisions were unified, the collective position of resisting invasions was enhanced. Maintaining a guard on the few relatively open approaches by land and along the coastline of the Thermaic Gulf would serve to defend the security of the natural subdivisions, as well as to improve the effectiveness of routes reaching outward in all directions.

In sum, Macedonia offered its population an array of resources:

- fertile soil for agriculture and fine pastures for domesticated animals, the twin supports of the ancient economy;
- an abundance of wild animals and fish;
- excellent timber and mineral resources for internal use and for external trade;
- a fair degree of security due to the configuration of mountains and rivers;
- access to the sea coupled with a great hinterland;
- a location that combined some Mediterranean features with European climatic and topographical conditions;
- a region that was likely to be tempting to others and thus one that would profit from unification.

Accepting the views of Hippokrates and Aristotle on the role of an environment on the character of its inhabitants, it is possible to argue that the nature of Macedonia would promote certain characteristics in its people. Certainly it is not a "soft" environment: Macedonians must be hardy to take advantage of the resources of the mountains – to hunt the deer and lions, to mine the ores, to move the flocks from summer to winter pastures, and to guard the narrow mountain clefts from invaders. And since Macedonia was surrounded by potential invaders, the preservation of independence would fail without effective coordination of security. A would-be leader of these people would have to be trained to manage the territory that presented both great potential and constant dangers.

The Inhabitants

We have emphasized the natural divisions within the territory that was expanded during the reign of Alexander I in the fifth century and even more so during that of Philip II. Those divisions were conducive to distinctions among groups of inhabitants. Shifting

populations reach back into the Bronze Age, when they are revealed by material culture: the nature of sites, burial traditions, pottery techniques. During the Bronze Age Indo-European peoples prevailed in the west and northwest; external influences can be traced to Thracians in the east, Mycenaeans in the south, and people known as the Bryges (or Phryges), whose ceramic styles reflect a central European origin. Evidence suggests that the earlier peoples persisted, although new groups relatively small in overall numbers migrated into the region. Incursions produced shifts in the populations but did not change the basic structure of life that had been developed from the Neolithic Age. Consequently, lower and upper Macedonia had a common Indo-European heritage in prehistoric times and in the age of Philip and Alexander. The same common bond existed between the core peoples of Macedonia and most of their neighbors: Thracians, Paionians, Epirotes, and even Illyrians were of Indo-European stock.

However, great differences exist between various Indo-European peoples. While they are related by a common basic language, that once single language has branched to become a many-limbed tree over the millennia of developments amongst individual Indo-European speakers. The 12 main limbs are Anatolian, Baltic, Germanic, Greek, Latin or Romance and Italic, Illyric or Albanian, Indic, Iranian, Keltic, Slavic, Thracian, and Tocharian. Each of those limbs has produced its own smaller branches in the form of dialectic differences. In terms of languages in current use these branches number 77; some 36 forms of Indo-European are no longer in common use. As the range of categories reveals, the variety of forms of Indo-European may be unclear or even unintelligible to speakers of other forms of the mother language. Moreover, different environments produce distinct ways of life that, in turn, result in new vocabulary that is not necessary amongst other Indo-European peoples.

In sum, since the diversification of language had been underway for eight thousand to nine thousand years by the fifth century BCE, unification of the several Indo-European peoples in the southern

Balkan region fostered by a sense common heritage and language was not likely. In fact, not all of the peoples may have been Indo-European speakers; the identities of some tribal groups living along both sides of the Pindos watershed are not certain. In his sensible summary of "Early Macedonia," Charles Edson, a dedicated scholar of Macedonian history, wrote of "congeries of barbarous tribes" in the eastern and central parts of what would become the unified kingdom of Macedon under Philip II. Common cultural elements may have been a factor making for cooperation, but perhaps even more important were common threats.

Nor would common ancestry serve to bind the Macedonians with their Indo-European neighbors further south along the Thermaic Gulf, namely the Greek branch of the Indo-Europeans. Indeed, the surviving opinions of certain Greeks of the fourth century BCE reveal the weakness of a common bond between the Greeks and the Macedonians. According to the Athenian orator Demosthenes, Philip was neither Greek nor even related to the Greeks, but one of the worst of barbarians from a place where it was impossible to buy even a good slave (*Philippics* I.4).

The issue of ethnicity was not only contentious in antiquity but remains so today, and not only among scholars but in the eyes of some modern Greeks. Much of the difficulty in learning the nature of the relationship is due to the absence of certain necessary kinds of evidence. For example, language is a primary key to identity – knowing whether the language of a people is Semitic or Indo-European or Asiatic is an important indicator of ethnicity – but this evidence is virtually absent for early Macedonian history. When inscriptions begin to appear in the archaeological record, the population of Macedonia has ties with Greece that are reflected in the Greek alphabetic writing of the inscriptions. Yet the use of Greek characters may have been no more than a convenience for these particular inscriptions or, as in the case of Greek alphabetic inscriptions in Thrace, may have been used because no native writing system existed. Another possibility is that Greek was becoming the *koine*, or common, writing system in regions beyond the primary

Greek areas in advance of the Hellenistic period. Information about the spoken language of the Macedonians is even scarcer: a single curse tablet found at Pella might be written in a "Macedonian" dialect of Greek. The only certain conclusion is that spoken Macedonian is sometimes differentiated from Greek.

On the other hand, in support of a link between Macedonian and Greek are the Macedonian personal and place names that occur in the Homeric poems. Among the personal names is that of the royal clan, the Argeadai. Later sources suggest that Philip and Alexander, and even earlier Argead kings, conversed easily with both Macedonians and Greeks. Second languages can be learned, of course, but, as we shall see, accounts of the Argead line in the Greek sources tell of a Greek ancestry.

Herodotos recounts the tale of three brothers who, after being expelled from Argos in the Peloponnese, made their way to Macedonia, where eventually and rather miraculously the youngest, Perdikkas I, became leader of a group of Macedonians known as the Argeadai, the royal clan (VIII.136–9). There may be truth in the tradition of movement – in fact, movements – from Greece to Macedonia; as late as the fifth century, citizens of the Greek polis of once-glorious Mycenae were given a new home in Macedonia when their land was ravaged by the polis of Argos. When the Athenians captured Histiaia on Euboia and expelled its inhabitants, the refugees were resettled in Macedonia during the reign of Perdikkas II. As mentioned above, the location of Macedonia lends itself to movement into the region and the Macedonians thought of themselves as migrants. It is the Argeads' point of departure that is uncertain, nor will acceptance of the truth of movement into lower Macedonia give an ultimate explanation of Macedonian identity.

Physical artifacts are another clue to the identity of a people: particular styles of pottery, architecture, sculpture, coins, and other metal work can reveal a common cultural tradition. Unfortunately, the regionalism of Macedonia produced a mix of styles often influenced by different neighbors – Greeks to the south, Thracians eastward,

and various Balkan peoples to the north and west. Nor has anthropological analysis of human remains produced a conclusive answer to the question yet, although DNA analysis holds promise for fuller evidence in the future.

Until new evidence becomes available, it seems appropriate to use the term by which Herodotos designated the inhabitants of the kingdom of Macedon – namely, Makednians (I.56.3) – and also to classify them as Indo-Europeans. Migrants into upper and lower Macedonia may well have been related. Movement into eastern regions took some of the Makednians, led by a clan called the Argeadai, to the coastal plain along the western shore of the Thermaic Gulf. Gradually, the newcomers consolidated control of the region stretching northward of Mt. Olympos to the head of the gulf, while other groups continued to dwell in the several more northern and western regions, which, as we have seen, were separated from one another by the natural features of the southern Balkan territory. But evidence for the nature of the languages of these groups remains elusive.

The issue of language and ethnicity is further complicated since our evidence of Macedonian ethnicity comes largely through Greek sources, and there was no single Greek view. What is more, the perception of Macedonian ethnicity changed over time. An earlier basis for defining Greekness based on ethnicity and genealogical descent from a common ancestor gave way to cultural criteria. Furthermore, a verdict on the Greekness of the Macedonians was dependent upon the criteria selected by the Greek writer in question. In light of problematic evidence in every category of proof, it is not surprising that debate on the "Macedonian Question" has a long history and has not been resolved.

With that ambivalence in mind, it is important to appreciate both the kinship and the differences with the Greeks in understanding Alexander in his world. Greek cultural influences increasingly penetrated Macedonian traditions even before Philip had added Greece to his kingdom. On the other hand, the "otherness" of Macedonia with respect to the Greek Aegean figures largely in the careers of



Map 2.1 Regions, Natural Features and Sites of Macedonia

Philip and his son. We will explore the question of Macedonian links with Greece further in chapter 4.

The Creation of a Kingdom from the Congeries of Tribes

The use of the single word "Macedonia" suggests a unified entity, which is an inaccurate conclusion for much, perhaps most, of the ancient history of the region. Only during the reign of Philip II was control extended substantially beyond the central plain bordering on the Thermaic Gulf of the Aegean. And in the contest for control following Alexander's death, that unity was quickly undermined. While kings preceding Philip had succeeded in adding territory northward of the small, earliest settlement of the Makednians

in Pieria, their possession of authority was regularly and severely challenged from all directions.

Our earliest reliable accounts concern the reign of Amyntas I (540–498 BCE), whose status was recognized even by the Persian kings, who established diplomatic relations with the Argead ruler. But the relationship was not between equals; in fact, the kingdom of Macedon might well be described as subject to Persian power during this period even if not formally brought under control as a satrapy, or province. A few years later, Xerxes used Macedonia as a staging ground for his assault on the Greek states in 480–479. Somewhat paradoxically, it may have been the enhanced status of the Persian alliance that allowed Amyntas to bring the regions of Elimeia, Orestis, Lynkestis, and Pelagonia into nominal confederacy with Macedon. His son and successor, Alexander I, whom Herodotos describes as especially clever and forceful, was able to consolidate additional territory westward toward the Pindos mountains and reaching north along the Axios River, at the head of the Thermaic Gulf, during his reign from 498 to 454. In his account of the Peloponnesian War in the last third of the fifth century, Thukydides describes the Lynkestians, the Elimiotes, and other "ethne" further inland as subjects and allies of the Macedonians (II.99.2). Also attributed to the first Alexander by some is significant innovation in infantry tactics and the relationship of foot-soldiers with the Macedonian king. Alexander had witnessed the success of the Greek hoplites in confronting the Persian forces, and certainly Macedon needed a strong military force to build then maintain the confederacy, to ward off other militant neighbors, and to withstand the intensifying Greek interests – particularly those of Athens – in the northern Aegean during and beyond the reign of Alexander I.

On the death of Alexander I, the succession was contested by his several sons – a frequent occurrence in Macedon in the fifth and fourth centuries, and even during the Hellenistic period following the death of Alexander the Great. Perdikkas II was the successful heir but only after eliminating two of his brothers and, probably,

the sons of one of those brothers. He ruled to 414/13 and, during his reign, all the potential threats mentioned above materialized. In fact, Perdikkas experienced even more interest on the part of outsiders in Macedonian territory and resources than his father had known, in large part due to the situation in Greece: the start of his rule coincided with the conversion of the voluntary alliance of Greek states headed by Athens into an involuntary association. That conversion, in turn, resulted in a growing division among the Greek states that led to 27 years of civil war (431–404) between Athens and her allies/subjects on the one hand, and Sparta as leader of the Peloponnesian League, on the other.

Macedonia's strategic location and its timber for ships and weapons were vital to both parties in the Greek conflict. The Athenians established a permanent presence at Amphipolis on the lower Strymon River in 437. The Spartans responded to requests for aid from Perdikkas II in his struggle with Thracian incursions into the Axios region. The confederate kingdom of Lynkestis took the opportunity to separate from the fragile Macedonian coalition and became the strongest tribal state in the region during the second half of the fifth century. Under its own king, Arrhabaios, the Lynkestians proved a powerful army against the combined force of the Macedonians under Perdikkas, the Spartan commander Brasidas with 3,000 hoplites and 1,000 cavalry, and a complement of Chalkidian troops. In spite of such severe problems, the core of the Macedonian kingdom remained intact.

Perdikkas' son and successor, Archelaos (414–400/399), benefited from developments in Greece that turned the attention of the rival states to other parts of the Mediterranean and Aegean. He is credited with strengthening the core of the kingdom by the construction of border forts to guard the kingdom's integrity, and of roads linking parts of the territory with one another. Archelaos may also have been responsible for establishing a city at the gates of the Axios river; atop a steep hill on the opposite banks stood a watch tower within an extensive circuit wall. Another major contribution was the cultivation of Hellenic culture in the Macedonian capital. Just

as Alexander I had entertained the Greek lyric poets Pindar and Bakkylides, and Perdikkas II had received visits from Hippokrates and the poet Melanippides, so too reputed visitors at the time of Archelaos included the Athenian poets Euripides and Agathon, the painter Zeuxis, and the musician/lyric poet Timotheos. Socrates was invited to visit Pella but refused on the grounds that he could not repay such hospitality. This Argead ruler was the first Macedonian to win a wreath at the quadriga (four-horse chariot) races in Olympia in 408 BCE. Archelaos also enlarged the settlement at Pella, which became the capital during the reign of Philip II, if not earlier. The end to Archelaos' endeavors came at the hand of a bitter Macedonian noble who took Archelaos' life, leaving an heir who was but a child. In the four decades that followed, the kingdom barely managed to survive the internal and external challenges that confronted its seven or eight rulers during the period.

In less than a decade, kingship changed hands among members of three branches of the Argead clan. Initially, the young son of Archelaos, Orestes, was recognized as king, with Aeropos – perhaps his uncle – acting as regent. Aeropos became king in his own right for four years after he had done away with his nephew. On his death, Amyntas II of the line of Alexander I ruled briefly until he was killed by a Derdas of Elimeia in upper Macedonia. A son of Aeropos, Pausanias, succeeded to the kingship for a few months until he was removed by treachery. The names are not as important as the cycle of rules accompanied by intrigue and murder. To be the eldest son of a ruling Argead was not a guarantee of peaceful succession or, if one were successful in being acclaimed king, of a long or unchallenged reign.

A son in the line of Amyntas reaching back to Alexander I had survived the struggle for power; he became king as Amyntas III in 393. Although his reign endured to 370/69, it was troubled internally and externally. An Illyrian invasion of Macedon in 388/7 drove Amyntas to abandon the kingship, and for an interlude one Argaios – perhaps a son of King Archelaos – ruled briefly. With the aid of Thessalian Greeks in a three-month campaign, Amyntas regained the

kingship in 387/6. In addition to the Illyrian invaders, he faced an incursion of Greeks from Olynthos on the Chalkidike peninsula in 383/2, a drive that even captured Pella. Amyntas turned to Sparta for alliance and for aid in the struggle between Macedon and Olynthos, which was not resolved until the reign of Philip II.

Twin credits are due to Amyntas for his staying power in such circumstances and for his progeny: Alexander II, who succeeded him for two years (369–368): Perdikkas III, who endured nearly seven years (368–359); and Philip II, who created the massive kingdom of Macedon in his 23-year reign (359–336). Alexander II faced civil war at home, was drawn into ongoing Greek affairs in neighboring Thessaly, and was murdered. His younger brother, Perdikkas III, succeeded him, although a regent exercised real power for several years. In addition to internal threats to his power, the main external threats demanding Perdikkas' leadership were Athenian activities in the northern Aegean and the invasions of the Illyrians, who were successfully pressing eastward from the Adriatic. In determining to meet the threat of the Illyrians, Perdikkas and some 4,000 Macedonians perished in battle in 360/59.

Given the history of rivalry for power recounted above, the choice of successor may have been uncertain. Perdikkas had a young son who might have been declared king. He also had a brother, Philip II. Other rivals included Pausanias and Argaios from other lines of the Argead clan, both of whom had briefly been kings in the 390s and early 380s respectively. After dealing with Pausanias and Argaios, Philip may have been selected as regent for the minor son of his brother or he may have been acclaimed king in his own right. Lively debate surrounds this question, but what is important is the outcome: Philip II became the next leader of the fragile Macedonian state. Here are the powerful words of Charles Edson:

> It was this moment of catastrophe and desperation which forged a nation out of the Macedonian people. All elements of society could now apprehend that mere survival depended upon willing obedience to the royal authority . . . The meteoric rise of Macedonia to the

> position of a great power under the genial rule of Perdikkas' younger brother, the famous Philip II, remains a classic instance of courageous and successful response to seemingly insurmountable external pressures. (1970: 43)

Philip could not afford to be constantly genial in an attempt to restore the integrity of the extensive region of which Thukydides wrote "the whole is called Macedonia" (II.99.6). Much of that whole in upper Macedonia had separated from the alliance forged by Alexander I or had been claimed by others – Illyrians, Thracians, and Greeks. He also faced rivalry for power from five pretenders. To lead an army, his first task was gaining legitimacy; in a word, dealing with rivals and cementing his own right to command. In the meantime, he made treaties rather than war with the Illyrian king and the Athenian demos. By 358, Philip could exchange diplomacy for military action in his dealings with outside powers: a successful campaign in Illyria followed by marriage to the daughter of the defeated Illyrian king mollified that threat, at least temporarily, and an incursion into Thessaly and marriage to a woman of a noble Thessalian family began the Macedonian entrance into Greek affairs. In the following year, an alliance – again strengthened by marriage to the daughter of the king – initiated strong Macedonian ties with Epiros. Closer to the core of Macedonia, upper Macedonia was reunited with the kingdom in 358, and Philip began to use force in an effort to impede Greek, especially Athenian, presence in the territory of the northwest Aegean; in 357 he attacked and captured the Athenian settlement of Amphipolis by the River Strymon, a thorn in Macedon's eastern side for 80 years.

A similar scheme of alliance supplemented by marriage, diplomacy, and campaign continued throughout Philip's career. Essential to any hope of success was adequate military strength; consequently, while developments cannot be precisely dated, it is more than likely that rebuilding and reforming the army that had been so decimated in 359 were an immediate priority for Philip. He had had the advantage of learning at first hand the major reform of the hoplite

phalanx accomplished by Thebes, when he had been a hostage in Thebes (367–364) at the age of young manhood, i.e. ages 15–18. The significance of this knowledge is shown by its success in allowing Thebes to create an empire of its own after defeating the hitherto superior Spartan army in 371. The changes to the Macedonian force are discussed more fully in the account of Alexander's inheritance from Philip in chapters 3 and 5. Here we may note the major features: a more mobile infantry equipped with a longer spear; expanded cavalry; special squadrons of light infantry and light cavalry; and development of siege machinery. As the territory of the kingdom expanded – whether through conquest or alliance – more troops became available. And with efficient use of resources, they could be constantly in the field either on campaign or in drill.

Philip helped his own cause but he also benefited from the actions and attitudes of his enemies. Aid from his enemies took the form of disunity. Apart from the alliances increasingly reaching out from Macedon, there was little unity among the various peoples of the Balkans, or Thracians, or Greeks, among whom war against one another was a fact of life. Philip understood and used these internal conflicts to his advantage in expanding his sphere of influence further south into Greece; eastward against the Greek states of the Chalkidike peninsula and then into Thrace as far as the Black Sea; west to the shore of the Adriatic; and north into the Balkans.

Thessaly and the Chalkidian states continued to occupy him during the 350s. By 352, campaigns in Thessaly had met with enough success – although not complete victory – that he assumed the Thessalian position of *tagos*, leader of the military levies of all four regions of Thessaly. Philip's capture of the center of the Chalkidian League at Olynthos in 348, and the subsequent destruction of that city as well as perhaps more than 30 other settlements, effectively brought the Chalkidike into the Macedonian sphere. Since southern Greeks – particularly the Athenians – were active in the northern Aegean, Philip's action virtually promised ongoing confrontation with the major Greek poleis. At the same time, these more remote Greeks appreciated the force of the Macedonian army;

it might be used to aid the cause of one party in the never-ending wars between the poleis, wherever they were located.

The first half of the fourth century saw a continuation of the ruinous civil war between Athens and Sparta and their allies, from 431 to 404. In a kaleidoscope of attempts at overlordship on the part of major and minor states alike, participants moved from positions of power to the status of defeated subjects. In the process, former enemies became allies while former allies took the field against one another. As Greeks fought one another, their attention was, first, distracted from Macedonia and, later, turned to Philip and his army as tools in their own efforts. Philip used the situation adroitly. When invited to settle the war ranging between Phokis and other states in central Greece, Philip accepted that invitation. Phokis was defeated in 346 with Philip gaining another official position, namely membership in the council protecting the sacred site of Delphi.

Philip could not ignore other traditional enemies: Macedonian armies marched against the Illyrians in the north, advanced to Epiros in the west, and into Thrace and then Skythia in the east. New agreements were made, such as an alliance with the king of the Getai, who dwelt in the region between Thrace and the Danube; new colonies were founded. With southern Greece, at least for the moment, relations were not military. Philip sent and received embassies particularly to and from Athens, while supporting pro-Macedonian elements in various parts of Greece. The states of Messenia and Megalopolis in the Peloponnese, for example, were invited to join the Delphic Amphiktyony alongside the other Greek states and Philip.

Notwithstanding such diplomacy, fear of Philip's intentions was increasing, again particularly in Athens, whose own interests in the Black Sea were jeopardized by Macedonian assaults. However, confrontation would involve more than Macedon and Athens and it would not be located in the Propontis. Rather, when fighting in central Greece flared again early in the 330s, Philip led his Macedonians back to Greece as both Macedonian king and Greek

official. Growing concern about Philip's ultimate intentions produced a coalition led by Athens and Thebes, with the participation of Boeotian allies of Thebes and contingents from Achaian states. At the site of Chaironeia in Boeotia, some 30,000–35,000 Greek troops met a roughly equal number of Macedonians commanded on the right wing by Philip and on the left by his son, Alexander, who held command of the cavalry. The Macedonian victory was decisive; Greek survivors fled homeward, expecting retaliation.

In place of retaliation the affairs of the Greek states were settled by the foundation of the League of Corinth, into which all, with the notable exception of Sparta, were drawn for offensive and defensive purposes. Sparta's absence is telling: the presence of the once supreme hoplite state of all Greece was no longer necessary for the functioning of a kingdom that, by 336, reached from Illyria in the northwest to the west coast of the Black Sea in the southeast, and from the southern Balkans in the north through the Greek mainland in the south. The territorial size of the kingdom is estimated to have been 16,680 square miles (43,210 km^2) – over 12,000 square miles (31,500 km^2) of which were effectively possessed and 4,500 square miles (11,710 km^2) directly controlled. At the end of the Peloponnesian war, the size had been 8,400 square miles (21,750 km^2), while during the reign of Alexander I it had been 6,600 square miles (17,200 km^2). Members belonged by conquest, alliance cemented by marriage to the Macedonian king, and partnership in shared goals planned by council meetings of delegates from all the participants. At the center of every link was Philip II, reaching out in various ways and many directions from his capital at Pella.

The new order had barely begun when Philip was assassinated in 336. It is a validation of Philip's planning that his son and successor, Alexander III, was able to reaffirm his father's arrangements during the first two years of his kingship. Revolts erupted – from Illyria, where Alexander led the Macedonian army in 335, and from Greece, centered on Thebes. The new king dealt with both, quickly

and effectively: Thebes was destroyed. The kingdom of Macedonia was under control and its northern borders had been secured when he began the campaign against Persia in 334.

However, it is important to remember that the unification was very recent and that tensions not only remained but had been intensified in the creation of the expansive kingdom, which, under Philip, had grown so significantly in territorial size and population. Various congeries of people now drawn together by conquest or alliance remembered themselves as separate entities – separated both by natural features of the land and by culture. Most, if not all of those groups remembered their independence. Separatist movements that had been a problem for earlier Argead rulers would continue to trouble Alexander. Moreover, patterns of life still differed throughout the kingdom: in some regions, transhumant herding was a dominant pursuit, while in others, settled farming occupied the attention of most people. Herders and farmers have throughout much of history found it difficult to accommodate to one another. Another tension also stemmed from regional differences: specific locations gave exposure to a range of other peoples. In upper Macedonia, Balkan influence and potential conflict prevailed, while along the Thermaic Gulf, Macedonians were exposed to Greek and Thracian influence and incursion.

Many of the Argead kings had actively sought to incorporate elements of Greek culture. In the fifth century, Alexander I had demonstrated his right to participate in the Olympic Games; Archelaos had imported Greek goods and people to his capital at Aigai and had held games at Dion; Philip II drew on Greek innovations – such as the Theban military reform – as well as on goods and on people like Aristotle. Philip also strengthened his ties to Greece by achieving three victories at the Olympics in 356, 352, and 348. From one perspective, such cultural borrowing was practical, but from another point of view, it too was a cause of friction. It is likely that many of the subjects of Archelaos and Philip were not altogether happy about the hellenization of Macedonian culture. As Alexander led his army further and further eastward, he faced

what are commonly known as Macedonian reactions against his newly acquired non-Macedonian practices.

Expansion of the kingdom had required greater centralization. Centers had been established earlier – at Aigai and Pella – but further steps had been essential as new territories were added to the realm. Existing centers were enlarged, forts and colonies established as the borders of the kingdom were extended, and roads to connect regions had to be constructed. Mandatory, too, was the need for a large, flexible military force and, as Philip's efforts extended to the Propontis and Black Sea, naval power had to be created. All of these developments called for resources, which existed, to be sure, but had now to be efficiently produced and utilized by a central authority. That centralization, in turn, demanded an enlargement of administrative tools beyond the original, rather simple structure of Macedonian authority. Even the effective creation of these tools might well alienate conservative elements of the population, especially other elite families.

Finally, ongoing tension existed at the very heart of the state, namely in the Argead ruling clan. By the fourth century, a number of collateral branches existed, and although kingship often passed from father to son, it could – as on the occasion of the death of Archelaos, described above – move from elder brother to younger or to a member of a collateral branch. Philip's own father, Amyntas III, came from a collateral branch of the clan. The claim to kingship, on the death of its present holder, was regularly challenged.

In sum, in spite of the impressive expansion and the bonds of centralization within it, the kingdom remained fragile and threats from beyond the borders were ever present.

The Nature of Life in Fourth-Century Macedonia

When Alexander chastised his men for ingratitude in 324, he pictured the massive change in the nature of life in Macedonia during his father's rule.

> Philip took charge of you as wanderers without resources, most of you dressed in hides, pasturing a few sheep on the mountain-side, and fighting poorly for them against Illyrians and Triballians and the Thracians on our borders; he gave you cloaks to wear instead of skins, led you down from the mountains to the plains, made you worthy warriors against nearby barbarians, so that you came to rely on your own virtues rather than the security of your region. He defined you as residents of cities and arranged good laws and customs. Of those barbarians by whom you once were ruled and plundered, he made you masters rather than slaves and subjects. (Arrian VII.9.2–3)

If we can accept the truthfulness of this harangue, Philip brought the Macedonians from a barbarian to a civilized status. Evidence, although it is meager, calls for some modification of the suddenness of the civilizing process, since an ongoing process of sedentarization and urbanization in Thessaly, Macedonia, and Epiros can be dated back from the end of the Bronze Age into the fourth century BCE. While Philip's efforts greatly stimulated the process, village life had increased earlier in parts of Macedonia, especially regions in lower Macedonia influenced by Greek colonies that had been established early in the Iron Age and were becoming increasingly numerous in the eighth century and later. In most regions of Macedonia, villages were small, in terms of both territorial size and population. In western Macedonia, sites larger than about 7.5 to 10 acres (3–4 hectares) were rare. By contrast, the largest settlement was Pella, with 74 acres (27 hectares) and an acropolis of 4.5 acres (1.8 hectares).

Occupations also varied between regions: in those with extensive, fertile plains farming along with stock raising would be the means of existence for many, while more upland areas fostered transhumant pasturing as a way of life, the sort of life that Arrian reports through Alexander's speech to his men. The resources of those same upland areas encouraged hunting and fishing and, as demand for Macedonian timber increased, harvesting the products of the forests would demand the labor of some of the population. Others engaged

in recovering mineral resources. Herodotos records mining from the time of Alexander I, noting one mine that yielded a talent of silver every day for that king (V.17). Another regular occupation for adult males was warfare, which, as we have seen, was almost a continual need. Calculations based on the number of free Macedonians indicate the pool of men that could be mobilized:

Before the reign of Philip:	80,000–100,000
During Philip's reign:	160,000–200,000
During Alexander's reign:	240,000–300,000

The size of population in Philip's time is estimated at 700,000, an increase from 250,000 slightly more than a century earlier.

Some Athenians of the fourth century had rough words to describe the Macedonians. We have mentioned the view of the



Figure 2.7 Herding is a continuing occupation, especially in the highlands, as near Grevena. Photograph by Richard R. Johnson

Athenian orator Demosthenes that Philip was a barbarian from a dishonorable place (*Philippics* I.4). Modern assessments are generally kinder. Perhaps Demosthenes' rhetoric, employed to rouse the Athenians against Philip, masked a personal estimation, given in the account of one of his contemporaries, that Philip was "the most gifted of men" (Aischines, *On the Embassy* 2.41). He would need special gifts to deal with Macedonia, which had the characteristics of a rough, pugnacious frontier society. Written sources recount the practice of blood feud; the need for a man to kill an enemy before he could exchange a halter for a belt, and to slay a boar with a spear without the use of a net before being able to be seated at symposia (both probably were coming-of-age and status rituals); a fondness for hunting wild animals; dances that replicated the theft of cattle and enacting a sham battle at the ceremony inaugurating the campaigning season; and drinking parties where wine unmixed with water could cause the death of a participant. Euripides' play the *Bakkhai* was composed when the poet was in residence at the Macedonian capital and, consequently, the atmosphere of the tragedy is thought to have been inspired by the nature of Macedonian life. It may be sufficient to recall that the chorus is composed of frenzied women devotees of Bakkhos/Dionysos, one of whom is the mother of the king, who himself is not a devotee of that god. Thinking that they have caught a fleeing animal that they will sacrifice to the god, the women tear the young king to shreds.

We must remember that most of our evidence derives from non-Macedonian accounts. There is little Macedonian written evidence, certainly no surviving work of Macedonian historians or tragic poets contemporary with Philip and Alexander. Material evidence, however, does point to a sophisticated artistic tradition. The discovery of the royal tombs at Vergina/Aigai dating to the fourth century was stunning proof of this sophistication. One tomb, perhaps the burial place of Philip himself, had two chambers. The largest held bronze vessels and weapons – including a bronze cuirass that had gilt appliqué designs with gold strips attached vertically – that were grouped in one corner, while silver objects rested in



Figure 2.8 Mineral wealth: gold ivy wreath from a male burial in the cemetery of Sevasti, Pappas Mound, Prefecture of Pieria, c. 350 BCE. Now in the Archaeological Museum of Thessalonike. Photograph by Richard R. Johnson

another. Also found in the main chamber were five small carved ivory heads with realistic images, most likely of Philip, his parents, his wife Olympias, and their son Alexander. The larnax (coffin) in which the remains of the cremated deceased had been placed was fashioned of gold weighing more than 24 pounds. A beautifully wrought gold diadem lay near the head.

The material evidence, considered in connection with the efforts of King Philip II, suggests another "hidden" quality of Macedonian society. A king, no matter how effective he may be, needs more than a council of heads of major families and an army assembly of all Macedonian soldiers to control a sizeable kingdom. Administrative personnel and tools become increasingly essential as the state increases in size, complexity, and power vis-à-vis other, neighboring states. It has been argued that household functionaries of the early Macedonian court evolved into administrative positions. For

example, on this interpretation, the *daites*, once an overseer of kingly meals, took on administrative financial responsibilities.

When formerly independent regions became administrative districts they required oversight and, in some cases, collection of taxes. The essential natural resources of the kingdom had to be supervised under central control. Dealing with envoys and sending envoys in return demanded coordination. Boundaries must be settled, treaties drawn up, scouts dispatched to learn the situation in the far-flung corners of Philip's sphere of attention. Unfortunately, we do not have a Constitution of the Macedonians, to compare with the Aristotelian *Constitution of the Athenians*, to reveal the nature of the mechanisms that emerged to manage these responsibilities. However, the success of Philip would be unimaginable without an efficient system of management. The accomplishments of earlier kings such as Alexander I and Archelaos indicate that the roots of that system had been planted at least a century before Philip's reign. Consequently, it is reasonable to envision that the extensive kingdom produced an increasingly more formal organization, at least at the core of the kingdom.

Alexander in the Context of Macedonia and Macedonians

Our goal is to understand the nature of Alexander the Great. How does knowledge of the land of his birth and youth, of the people over whom he assumed rule in 336, and the established way of life shed light on that goal?

Perhaps most apparent are the natural resources that Macedonia contained – its minerals, timber, rain- and river-water, fertile plains, fish and birds and wild animals. As Jared Diamond has argued, inhabitants of regions with an abundance of natural resources have a significant advantage in creating successful cultures. But command of these resources in Macedonia did not come without serious effort: as we have seen, the physical character of the region molded

a tough people. To make use of the natural resources and inhabitants, and to create and then maintain an independent state, meant command of mountainous terrain and the abundant waters of long rivers, both of which tended to divide the region into smaller units. An ability to turn these features into assets was essential to the emergence of an effective state. An effective leader would know the importance of this ability not only with respect to economic strength but also to enhance the military skill of his force. We will examine this value of this ability in the final chapter.

The major battles fought and won by the Macedonians under Alexander's command took place at rivers. The first encounter occurred at the Granikos River, which the Macedonians crossed, then climbed the opposite bank to engage the enemy. On the second encounter, at Issos, Alexander led his troops across the Pinaros River to engage the Persian force. The defeat of the Indian leader Poros and his troops took place along the monsoon-swollen Hydaspes River (the modern Jhelum). After that victory, the Macedonians made their way south along the Indos and then explored its two mouths and coastline in vessels that Alexander had ordered constructed for the purpose. Knowledge of the importance of waterways for communication and unification was a valuable by-product of Alexander's Macedonian heritage.

Macedonia also taught him well how to deal with mountains, teaching essential to the campaign in central Asia. Instructed by Alexander, the Macedonians took supposedly impregnable citadels such as Sogdiana in Bactria (Arrian IV.18.5–19.4) and the rock of Aornos, a site reputed to have repulsed the efforts of Herakles (Arrian IV.30.1–4).

Macedonian leaders appreciated the value of those who could accomplish such feats, the heart of their military. Pressures on the core of the kingdom were constant and existed on every border. Soldiers trained to withstand and, hopefully, prevail over Illyrian, Thracian, Greek, and other incursions were key to the integrity of the realm. These potential soldiers were raised in conditions that honed their physical fitness: shepherds moving flocks from lower

winter pastures to summer pastures in the mountains; hunters of wild beasts; farmers. Such men could be doughty warriors and a wise ruler would appreciate the value of his Macedonian men-at-arms.

He would do well to also appreciate the middling location of Macedonia – its proximity and its attractions for others. Isolation was impossible. Consequently, gaining familiarity with likely enemies would be an important asset. As we have sketched above, Alexander watched the expansion of the territory of Macedonia and its increasing interaction with other peoples. Plutarch reports that when Alexander was very young he conversed with envoys from the Persian king while Philip was away (*Alexander* V.1–3). His questions were about road systems, the king's character, and the numbers of Persian troops. Even if this report is not accurate, Pella had become a hive of international activity during Alexander's childhood. His world extended beyond the traditional Macedonian sphere.

Surely this is essential knowledge in one who must deal with other cultures. On the other hand, too great a leaning away from the Macedonian "way of life" could be dangerous; witness the feelings of Alexander's companion Kleitos. As Arrian reports, Kleitos was distressed by Alexander's adoption of foreign ways, and at one point when the king was being praised, Kleitos was dismissive of that praise, feeling that "the deeds of Alexander were not as great and wondrous as some praised them. They were not accomplished by one man alone but for the most part they were deeds of the Macedonians" (IV.8.4–5). Plutarch's account is even more explicit in reporting Kleitos as saying that it was wrong to ridicule the Macedonians in the presence of barbarians and enemies, for although some Macedonians had been bested by the foreign enemy, they were still far superior men (*Alexander* L). Kleitos died for these accusations at the hand of Alexander himself.

Use of the natural resources of the region demanded certain knowledge and judicious allocation of them, just as the interaction between Macedonians and others required another kind of careful balancing act on the part of the Macedonian king.

3
Being an Argead

Macedonian kingship rested with members of one clan, the Argeads. Alexander descended from Argead kings who can be traced with some accuracy to the late sixth century. His father Philip was an Argead and his mother Olympias became affiliated with the clan through marriage. The connection by birth, consequently, was an essential factor in the determination of every successive king. The position of king, once secured, brought assets unavailable to others, but it also produced serious threats to the retention of power. Beginning with the history and nature of the Argeadai, we will turn to the way that regal power was utilized by Philip II and the significance of Philip's accomplishments for his son and successor, and then to the other half of his parentage: by the time of the reign of Amyntas III, Philip's father, the role of the queen-mothers was not negligible, and Olympias was no exception.

The Argead Line

Through his father, Alexander was a member of the Argead line, the royal clan of the Makednians. Although his mother Olympias was Epirote, maternal lineage seems not to have been a factor that disqualified a king's son as a potential heir to his father: Philip's own

mother was of mixed Illyrian and Lynkestian ancestry, and all three of her sons were acclaimed king.

In his account of the Persian Wars, Herodotos has good reason to include references to Macedon and its kings, Amyntas I, who ruled until 498/7, and his son, Alexander I, who succeeded his father as king, enjoying a long reign until c. 454. Describing Alexander's mission to convince the Athenians to join the Persian cause, Herodotos recounts the origin of the Argead line and Alexander's place in it.

> Alexander (I) was the son of Amyntas (I), Amyntas of Alketas; the father of Alketas was Aeropos; of Aeropos, Philippos; of Philippos, Argaios; and of Argaios, Perdikkas – who first won the sovereign power. (VIII.139)

To trace the origin of the line, the father of history continues that Perdikkas I

> took power over the Macedonians in this way: Three brothers, Gauanes, Aeropos, and Perdikkas, descendants of Temenos, fled from Argos [in Greece] to Illyria and from there crossing into upper Macedonia they settled in the town of Lebaia. There they took on work for the king in exchange for a wage, one tending the horses, another the oxen, and the youngest of them, Perdikkas, the rest of the flocks . . . The king's wife cooked the food for them. When baking, the bread for the boy Perdikkas swelled to double its normal size. Since this always happened, she reported it to her husband. On hearing this it quickly occurred to the king that it was a sign of something important. Calling for the servants, he commanded them to leave his country. They asked, in all justice, to be paid their wage so that they might leave. While the king was hearing this request for a wage, the sun was shining through the smoke-hole in the house, and the king recklessly said, "I give this just wage to you," pointing to the sun. The elder brothers Gauanes and Aeropos stood dumb-struck on hearing this. But the boy, who happened to be holding a knife, said "We accept, o king, that which you give," and traced an outline on the floor with his knife and, gathering the sunrays into his lap three times, he and the others departed. (VIII.138.1–5)

The king decided that there was something strange in all this and sent riders on horseback to stop the brothers. A river allowed the brothers to cross, but its waters then rose so high that the pursuers were unable to proceed. Eventually the young men reached another part of Macedonia, called the Gardens of Midas, where wild roses producing blooms of 60 petals emitted the sweetest fragrance in all the world.

The tale has many signs of folk tale but, at the same time, reveals the Macedonian view of an early kinship with Greece. It may also suggest some uncertainty about the origins of the Argead line due to the existence of alternative accounts of the progenitor of the clan. Another version makes one Karanos – sometimes described as a brother of the seventh-century tyrant of Argos – the founder. However, the Greek word *karanos* carries the generic meaning of "ruler." The lineage of the Makednians as given by Hesiod makes the progenitor of the line Makedon. Makedon was the son of Zeus and, through his mother Thyia, the grandson of Deukalion and, thus, cousin of Doros, Aiolos, and Xouthos, who were the progenitors of the Dorians, Aiolians, and Ionians (*Catalogues of Women* and *Eioai* fr. 3.) Both accounts may reflect attempts to relate Macedonians to the Greeks, and many concur with the view of Eugene Borza that these accounts of the Argeads' origin in Argos emerged in the fifth century and were centered on Alexander I, who was known as the Philhellene.

Although the origin of the royal family of Macedon remains uncertain, its importance in Macedonian rule cannot be denied. To have any expectation of kingship, membership of the line was essential. At the same time, conditions associated with the increasing size of the clan produced collateral branches, and tensions between them could and often did create grave difficulties for individual Argeads.

An immediately apparent advantage is that birth into the clan offered the possibility of kingship. It *was* a crucial factor. Normally a king would be succeeded by his own son, as Herodotos' account of the relationship between the first six kings indicates. However, this was not always the case: on the death of Amyntas III, kingship went to his son Alexander II, but Alexander was succeeded by a

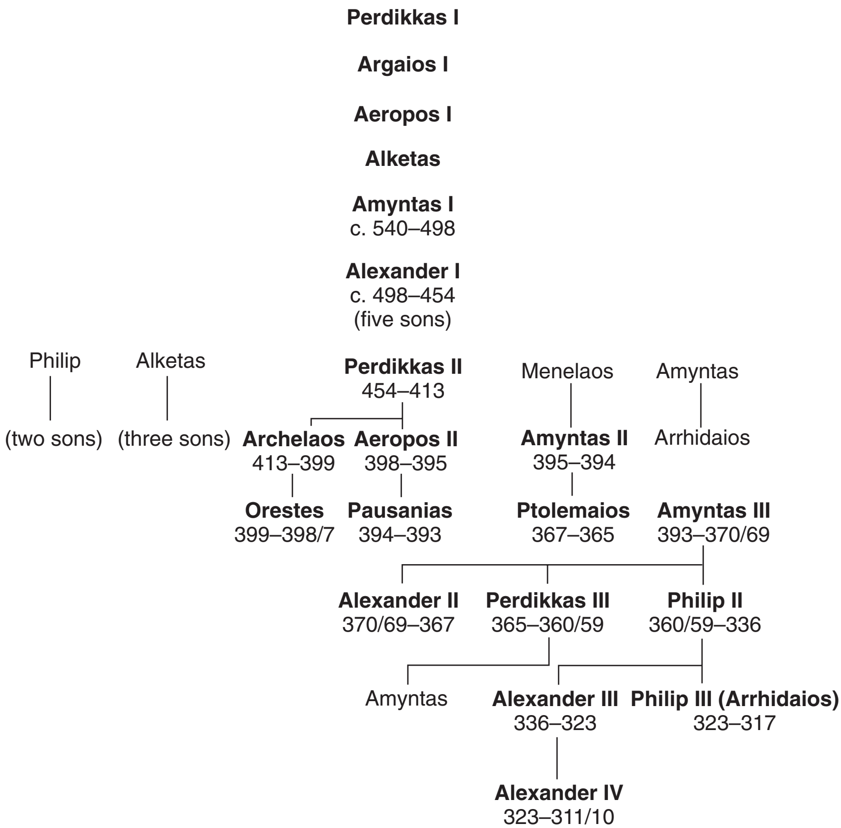


Figure 3.1 Argead genealogy. Rulers are shown in **bold**

brother. Another usual practice was the award of kingship to the first-born son, but again there were exceptions, especially when sons of the deceased king quarreled amongst themselves. Moreover, the nature of our evidence about the internal affairs of Macedon precludes certainty about dates of births. Alexander III, for example, may have been Philip's second son.

The proliferation of branches further complicated succession. In the struggle following the death of Perdikkas II described in chapter

2, members of three Argead branches held the kingship for short periods. Later, on the death of Philip II, kingship might have returned to the line of his brother Perdikkas, who had preceded Philip as king. Perdikkas had a son, Amyntas, who because of his youth was by-passed for his uncle Philip. By 336, Amyntas was an adult who had a just claim to kingship. Later, when Alexander III died in 323, the choice of the army assembly was Philip's son, Philip Arrhidaios, while the choice of Alexander's generals was Alexander's child, should that yet unborn child be a male. Thus, while the choice seems to have been narrowed to members of the Argead clan for several centuries before the time of Alexander, there were many Argead candidates for succession.

The nature of Argead rule

This bond between the Argead king and the army assembly was essential to succession and subsequent rule. Herodotos described Alexander not only as *basileus*, or ruler, of the Macedonians but also as *strategos*, or commander, of the kingdom's military (IX.44). Precisely what the two terms connoted in the minds of the Macedonians cannot be discerned; it is even uncertain whether the Macedonians themselves knew their leaders as *basileis*, for the coins struck by Philip II do not bear the title, and it is only toward the end of the reign of Alexander III that we find an inscribed coin connecting the two words *Alexandrou* and *basileos*. On the other hand, it is certain that duties and prerogatives associated with command were integral to holding the *basileia*, or rule, over the Macedonians.

The sum of the powers and prerogatives of Macedonian kings was, in many respects, similar to that of Homeric heroes: both the heroes of epic fame and the Macedonian rulers gained and maintained power by means of personal ability rather than as holders of an official position. Macedonian kings were always more or less successful according to their individual capabilities and, because of the constant threat of invasion from neighboring peoples, proven

military leadership was an essential, ongoing requirement. As we have seen, the history of Macedon both before and after Alexander's reign demonstrates well the dangers inherent in the kingdom's "middle" position between continental Europe and the Greek peninsula, regularly inviting intruders from every direction.

This need for military strength to preserve the kingdom was mirrored in Macedonian institutions. By the time of Philip II, and perhaps as early as the reign of Alexander I, all free men capable of bearing arms were of primary significance to the preservation both of the state and, consequently, of the power of an individual ruler. It was the right and responsibility of the army assembly to name the king. And inasmuch as the chosen man would lead the army to victory or defeat, he must possess pronounced qualities of leadership in the field, for the king was expected to lead his men not only by his knowledge of logistics and strategy but also through his personal prowess in battle, fighting in the forefront as did Achilles, Diomedes, and all the other leaders of contingents at Troy.

Further enhancing the need for military strength was the nature of internal politics within the kingdom. Other noble families existed even in lower Macedonia before the expansion of the kingdom into upper Macedonia, but that expansion brought into the state a number of clans as "royal" in their own kingdoms as the Argeads were in Macedon. Diplomacy in dealing with these families was important, certainly, but Macedonian soldiers under the command of their king were the foundation upon which diplomacy might be successful. The elite of the enlarged kingdom enjoyed the status of the king's companions, or *hetairoi*. Over time, ties of loyalty acquired a force that went beyond the threat of physical retaliation if the ties were broken. We will explore these developments more fully in chapter 5.

One means of forging tighter links came with the expansion of the kingdom's territory, which provided an opportunity to establish an economic bond between the king and newly recruited companions. It has been argued that land acquired by conquest became the king's to grant in use to others, in return for certain obligations

due him. As a Macedonian king – like Philip – extended the reach of his kingdom, he increased the amount of land available for many purposes, including new Macedonian settlements. Occupants of the newly incorporated territory might include companion warriors recruited from other parts of the Aegean sphere. Nearchos of Crete settled in Amphipolis, the former colony of Athens, during the reign of Philip. Nearchos was one of the companions, or *hetairoi*, of Philip and, later, of Alexander, for whom he served as a senior advisor. The brothers Erigyrios and Laomedon were from Mytilene on the Greek island of Lesbos; they too settled in Amphipolis and became *hetairoi* of Philip and, then, of Alexander.

Another means of tightening the bond with other noble families was an innovation attributed to Philip I: the policy that the sons of important families of upper Macedonia be sent to Pella to be trained as pages (bodyguards and future officers) of the king and associates of his sons. The arrangement served several ends. It provided necessary elements for efficient civil and military administration both in the present and into the foreseeable future. It also put hostages for the good behavior of their fathers into the hands of the Argead king. Among the sons of the high nobility from other parts of the kingdom were Krateros, Perdikkas, and Philotas, who would be important officers in Alexander's army. Hephaistion, the person reputed to be closest of any one to Alexander, was also raised in this system at Pella.

A forum in which views were shared among heads of elite families appears to have been a further dimension of the bond between the Argead kings and their near peers. Sources reporting on Alexander's rule mention his regular meetings with his major subordinates. When he had been informed of the movements of Dareios and his army before the battle of Issos, for example, Alexander gathered his companions to inform them. They encouraged him to push forward, after which he dismissed the meeting (*syllogos*, joint conversation) (Arrian II.6.1). Later, when the Macedonians were engaged in the siege of Tyre, envoys arrived from Dareios with the offer of 10,000 talents and cession of the land within the Euphrates River

extending to the coast of the Hellenic sea. Alexander called together his companions in a *syllogos* to discuss the offer (Arrian II.25.1–2). Membership and attendance in these meetings would have been fluid, predictably, as officers were dispatched to carry out responsibilities far from the camp of the king or were permanently eliminated by death. It is likely that Philip employed a similar forum for discussion among his key companions; however, it seems unlikely that a fixed body constituting a formal council existed in Macedon before the Hellenistic period. Rather, in Homeric style, those *hetairoi* at hand and in favor would be consulted at the pleasure of the king.

Embedded in this foundation of military command and of ties of loyalty with other important families were other features of royal power, one of which was religious responsibility for relations with the gods. The identity of Macedonian divinities is difficult to ascertain, especially for the period before the reign of Archelaos (413–399). On the one hand, the link between the Argeads and divinity had a long ancestry inasmuch as the Argeads could claim Herakles, sired by Zeus, as ancestor. And through the Aiacid family of his mother Olympias, Alexander's ancestry reached back to the line of Achilles, whose mother was the nymph Thetis. But there are grounds for believing that the cults of the Olympians became more important in the kingdom with the hellenization of Archelaos, who established a festival to Zeus and games in honor of Zeus and the Muses (Arrian I.11.1). Images of Apollo, Zeus, Dionysos, and Herakles were stamped on Macedonian coins, and we may infer that Dionysos was familiar to the Macedonians since Euripides' tragedy, the *Bakkhai*, was composed while the tragedian was at Pella. By 336, the final ceremony of Philip's reign included images of 12 gods – surely the 12 Olympians – and a thirteen image of Philip (Diodoros XVI.92.5). Alexander regularly sacrificed to the Olympians, as he did to Athena at Ilium (Arrian I.11.7). Sanctuaries to deities honored in the Greek world also demonstrate affinities between the religious practices of the two cultures.

However, there are traces of other practices, linked with essential aspects of kingship. The king purified the army by sacrificing a dog



Figure 3.2 Herakles, paternal ancestor of the Argeads, is shown in the middle being escorted by Athena (leading) and Hermes (behind) to be introduced to Olympos. © Copyright The Trustees of the British Museum

and he led the procession of soldiers as they marched between the two halves of the sacrificial animal. Moreover, cults of heroes of antique appearance akin to those of Homeric description remained part of Macedonian practice: Alexander established heroic honors for his companion Hephaistion (Arrian VII.23.6–7) and strove to surpass the accomplishments of acknowledged heroes like Herakles. His ancestor Alexander I was buried in a heroön (shrine to a hero) at Aigai, a practice associated with Archaic Greece, to be sure, but one that had largely been superseded by the fifth and fourth centuries.

In sum, it is likely that there were several elements in the Macedonian conception of the more-than-human. Yet, whatever the form of divinity being supplicated, there is no doubt about the

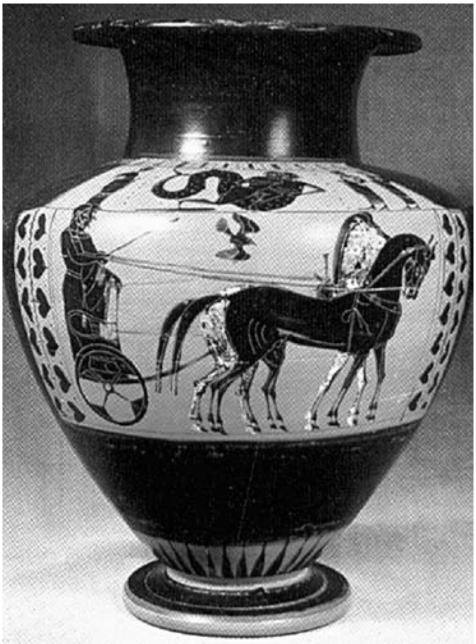


Figure 3.3 Achilles, Alexander's ancestor in his mother's line, yoking his horses to a *diphros* (traveling chariot). *Source*: I. Kakridis, *Greek Mythology*, Ekdotike Athenon SA

importance of the king's role in this supplication. The grand ceremony planned by Philip mentioned above is a notable example of the centrality of the Argead ruler in aspects of religion. Arrian's report of the end of Alexander's life shows the need to perform proper sacrifices even as Alexander was dying:

> Next day he bathed, and offered sacrifices . . . On the following day, he bathed again and offered appropriate sacrifices although he was fiery-feverish. He bathed in the evening and after bathing was extremely ill. The next day he was carried to the bath-house and again made appropriate sacrifices. On the following day, however, he was carried to the holy spot and sacrificed only with great distress (VII.25.4–5)

The maintenance of proper relations with the gods was a matter for more than the king; a staff of seers was part of the machinery of governance at Pella while Philip II was king, and at least one of this staff accompanied Alexander on his campaign.

These several characteristics of Argead kingship have deep roots. More recent was another feature that emerged with developments in the late fifth and fourth centuries; growing control of expansive territory and its population brought administrative needs. From the reign of Archelaos, Pella had become an administrative center; Archelaos himself was accorded the status of guest-friend and benefactor by the Athenians. Not only was Pella the residence of the Argead king and his families, but now it was also the hub of the offices of state – a secretariat and its records, managers of resources, units such as the department of military machinery, facilities for envoys. Taxes were levied on the land, use of harbors, mines, and royal domains operated through lease to be worked by tenants. Although the means of collecting the taxes or supervising the use of resources is unclear, such means surely existed for the Argeads, especially in the reigns of Philip and Alexander, who maintained large armies, built roads, fortresses, and ships, and supported a large entourage of family, young men in training to become companions, and visitors at Pella, as well as the staff required for their daily needs.

The consequences of Argead descent

Membership in the Argead line, especially for a male, carried notable advantages and expectations. As a youth, such a male would be trained to demonstrate brilliantly the qualities of a Macedonian leader. Like Telemachos, Odysseus' son, he would have to strengthen his wits and his spirit in order to do away with threats to himself and his family either by cunning or in open battle. In the process he would demonstrate that, as king, he could, like Odysseus, do "excellent things by the thousands, bringing forward good counsels and ordering armed encounters" (*Iliad* II.272–3). Even as a boy, he

would be able to ride his horse as well as, if not better than, sons of other elite families and he would be fit to hike seemingly endless distances with the soldiers of his father. When he reached his teenage years, he would be called up to exercise those skills in battle. Philip was enlisted to aid his elder brother at this time of his life, and Alexander held the command of the heavy cavalry at Chaironeia in 338 when he was just 18.

In order to be a contender, a potential heir must be physically capable; consequently, it is not surprising that the physical training of a scion of the Argead line would be onerous, in order to produce a Homeric style of leader among men. Killing a wild boar without use of a net was something any heir would do early in life. And he would meet the requirement of slaying a man sooner than most. Preparing for leadership entailed participation in real events, not set exercises. One of the better-known stories about the young Alexander demonstrates his ability at the age of perhaps 13 or 14 when a horse was brought to Philip for possible purchase. When the animal would allow no one to mount him, Philip commanded that the owner take it away. At this Alexander said, "What a horse they are losing, and all because they don't know how to handle him, or dare not try." Philip asked whether Alexander thought he could manage the horse better, at which Alexander offered to pay the high price of the animal. Although those in the company round Philip laughed,

> Alexander went quickly up to the horse, took hold of his bridle, and turned him towards the sun, for he had noticed that the horse was shying at the sight of his own shadow, as it fell in front of him and constantly moved whenever he did. He ran alongside the animal for a little way, calming him down by stroking him, and then, when he saw he was full of spirit and courage, he quietly threw aside his cloak and with a light spring vaulted safely on to his back. For a little while he kept feeling the bit with the reins, without jarring or tearing his mouth, and got him collected. Finally, when he saw that the horse was free of his fears and impatient to show his speed, he gave him his head and urged him forward, using a commanding voice and a touch of the foot. (Plutarch, *Alexander* VI)

By the late fifth and fourth centuries, the son of a king would also be initiated into the skills of *basileia* by means of more formal education. We will discuss the significance of Greek education for the Macedonians more fully in chapter 4. For now, we note that there is no question about the literacy skills of the Argead kings, particularly those of the fifth and fourth centuries. Treaties made between the ruling Argead and other states, peoples, or leagues were recorded, for example that between Perdikkas II and the Athenians in 422 BCE (*Inscr. Graec.*, I^2, 71 b). Philip II composed letters to the Athenians and received letters from notable Athenians in return. Alexander carried on a variety of correspondence as he marched eastward.

Raised at Pella, a potential heir would gain a sense of the resources of the kingdom and increasingly understand the importance of controlling them. Pella contained many types of resources in addition to the administrative departments located there. An especially vital resource was the young men of noble families throughout the realm who were brought to Pella to be trained as pages to the king, and later to serve as his companions, officers, and councilors. The boys' fathers arrived occasionally for councils or symposia with his father. And the king's sons would witness the growing frequency of the arrival and departure of envoys from distant states. It would be known that in other parts of the palace people were keeping records or planning new tools of warfare. With other members of his family, a potential heir would travel from Pella to the older site of Aigai, particularly for ceremonial occasions – the burial of a grandmother in one of the tumulus-mounds, purification of the army, athletic contests, a major sacrifice to one of the deities, or an impressive celebration. In a word, he would begin to realize his special position, one befitting a descendant of Herakles and Achilles.

But there were obstacles to that position. The practice of polygamy was likely to produce more than a single potential heir to the *basileia*. Philip was one of six sons of Amyntas III, and Alexander III had rivals in a son of Philip by Philinna and in his

cousin, Amyntas, the son of Philip's brother. Intrigue on the part of Philip's wives for the advancement of their own children would be a hazard of life in the Argead quarters at Pella. Additional threats came from members of other branches of the Argead family, whose number kept increasing. We have mentioned that, on the death of Archelaos, kingship changed hands among members of three branches of the Argead clan in less than a decade. Initially, the young son of Archelaos – Orestes – was recognized as king while Aeropos – perhaps his uncle – acted as regent. Not content with regency, Aeropos did away with his nephew in order to become king. His reign lasted less than four years. Amyntas II of the line of Alexander I then ruled briefly, until he was killed by an Elimiote. A son of Aeropos, Pausanias, succeeded to the kingship for a few months, until he was removed by treachery. The pace of events and the profusion of royal names convey the insecurity of rule all too well.

The advantages of the page-system that produced bodyguards for the king and companions for his sons also could have disastrous repercussions. Should the royal family of an annexed kingdom of upper Macedonia determine to assert its independence from Pella, the scion of that family now living in the royal city might well conspire to take the lives of members of the Argead line. Derdas of Elimeia, the murderer of king Amyntas II referred to above, is likely to belong in the category of noble families of once-independent realms. Consequently, the suspicion and hostility of others, especially companions who had access to one's private life, would be another danger well known to members of the kingly family.

With all these very real threats, a successful son of a ruling king would have to develop a keen awareness of the need to guard himself against perceived dangers. Those dangers were real and constant and had the habit of occurring without much warning. It was nearly impossible to become king of Macedon without descent in the Argead line. However, as we have seen, the good fortune of being the eldest son of a ruling king was not sufficient to ensure succession. First that son had to demonstrate the characteristics

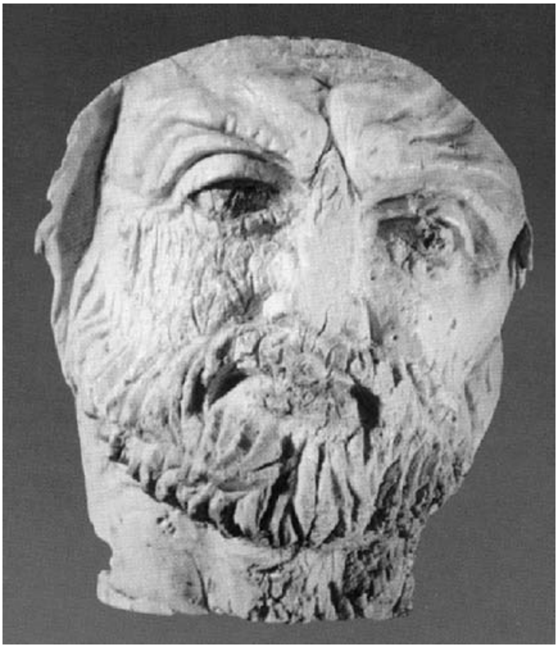


Figure 3.4 Ivory head from the decoration of the chryselephantine bier in the main chamber of Royal Tomb II at Vergina, believed to be Amyntas III. Courtesy of Mrs Olympia Andronikou-Kakoulidou

required to lead his people and, second, he must identify and withstand any challenges to his claim to *basileia*.

Philip II

While it was virtually essential to be a member of the Argead line, parentage was also a crucial factor in succession. From the earliest history of rule by members of this clan, families had proliferated. Thus kings were drawn from different branches of the one single family. Moreover, the achievements, or lack of them, of the ruling king weighed heavily in the success or failure of his successor.

During periods of grave challenges to the integrity of the kingdom, scions of branches other than that of the current ruler often succeeded in assuming rule, as the case of Amyntas III demonstrated. On the other hand, immense success on the part of a father might create a swell of support for his son. In these cases, however, enlarging the success of a dynamic father could present real difficulties to his son and successor. Alexander III had an extraordinary father. The fourth-century historian Theopompos, who wrote a history of Philip in 58 books (of which only fragments remain), believed, "Europe has never known a man the like of Philip, son of Amyntas."

Philip II was born in 382, the third and youngest son of Amyntas III and Eurydike. Amyntas could trace his own ancestry back to Alexander I, who, as we have seen, doubled the boundaries of the Macedonian kingdom and probably enhanced the role of foot-soldiers in the process. After Alexander's reign, however, kingship had passed to another branch of the royal family. Amyntas himself was aided by the more dynastic competition for power that accompanied the assassination of Archelaos in 399; skillfully surviving six years of continuing threats to his claim to power, coming from both other Argeads and external enemies, he secured the *basileia* in 393/2.

His reign was not peaceful. Early in his rule, he was driven from power when an Illyrian invasion of Macedonia established another, compliant king. Amyntas was able to secure aid from neighboring states nervous about Illyrian belligerency in their own lands: the powerful Greek polis of Olynthos on the western Chalkidian peninsula and perhaps the Thessalians assisted him in recovering the throne. In addition to force, he agreed to pay the Illyrians an annual tribute in exchange for their withdrawal. His own security and that of his kingdom were also in constant jeopardy from major Greek states, other neighboring non-Greek powers, internal rivalry between regions recently incorporated into the kingdom, and the competition among the Argeads themselves.

Philip's mother, Eurydike, may well have represented in her ancestry the influence of non-Greek powers and the regionalism tugging at the cohesion of the Macedonian kingdom, inasmuch as

sources describe her as having Illyrian and Lynkestian blood. Her marriage to Amyntas may represent the alliances that the Macedonian king was attempting to cement. It has been dated to c. 390 on the grounds that the eldest son of the union assumed the kingship in 369 as an active leader, not a youthful pawn of others. In addition to Eurydike, Amyntas took a second wife, Gygaia, who probably was an Argead, by whom he also had three sons. The practice of multiple marriages among the Argeads was not new. Perdikkas II had children by three women, as did Archelaos, and the five sons of Alexander I may well have had more than a single mother. That only three of them participated in the rule while their father lived and, when he died, only they were candidates for succession suggests the importance of maternal as well as paternal parentage.

Eurydike enjoys prominence in the ancient sources, especially the later accounts. Evidence dated to the period of her husband's reign reveals her status in association with religion. An inscription in the remains of a small temple at Aigia dated to the early fourth century reads: "Eurydike daughter of Sirrhas for Eukleia." "Eukleia" is used as an epithet of Greek goddesses, such as Artemis, or it may represent the name of a particular goddess.

Success in coping with and surviving dynastic politics revealed Eurydike's craftiness in preserving her influence, as well as her life, after the death of Amyntas III. She may, in fact, have lived on for another twenty or more years, years that demanded constant vigil on her part for herself and her three sons. The eldest, Alexander II, was murdered after ruling for roughly two years. It is possible that he was slain by one Ptolemaios, who may have been the son of Amyntas II, who ruled briefly in 395–394. For unclear reasons, perhaps necessity, Euridike allied politically and amorously with Ptolemaios, who may have served as regent for Eurydike's second son, Perdikkas, on his acclamation to the kingship in 365. Within a year, Perdikkas decided to rule directly and killed Ptolemaios. He himself was killed in battle with the Illyrians five years later. Now the claimants to the Macedonian kingship were Perdikkas' young

son, Amyntas IV, Perdikkas' brother Philip II, the two surviving sons of Amyntas II by Gygaia, and several rivals from other branches of the Argead line. Eurydike lived on into the reign of her third son, Philip II.

That Philip should be alive to contend for the kingship is an accomplishment in itself. His two full brothers had been killed and now his three stepbrothers could lay claim to succeed their father. Apart from threats by other claimants to the *basileia*, he might not have survived demands made on him while he was in his teenage years: he was endangered during the years that he was in Thebes as a royal hostage between 369 and 367 and, later, his posting away from Pella could have been fatal, especially if his presence was intended to secure the loyalty of a region – Elimeia – still committed to independence from Macedonian control. As events played out, however, Philip's removal from Pella may well have spared him from joining his brother Perdikkas when he led the Macedonian army against the Illyrian force in 359.

Philip did survive this tangle of threats. Two of his stepbrothers decided that leaving Macedonia would be wise, and he eliminated claimants from other branches of the Argead clan, yet allowed his nephew to live. Philip was acclaimed either regent for his young nephew or king in traditional fashion by the army assembly. There was no time to remove all of his rivals to power, since even more immediately dangerous were the Illyrians, who might well have pressed their advantage through a return incursion into Macedonia. It is surprising that they made no attempt against the vulnerable kingdom.

The weakness of Philip and his army is shown in his initial dealings with the Illyrians; he did not lead a force against the Illyrians, understandably in view of the much weakened Macedonian military, but rather negotiated a temporary settlement and, following his father's precedent, took an Illyrian wife, Audata, to strengthen the alliance. He may have earlier taken as wife Phila, daughter of the ruler of Elimeia, to cement the union of Elimeia with greater Macedonia. Eventually Philip made seven alliances fortified through

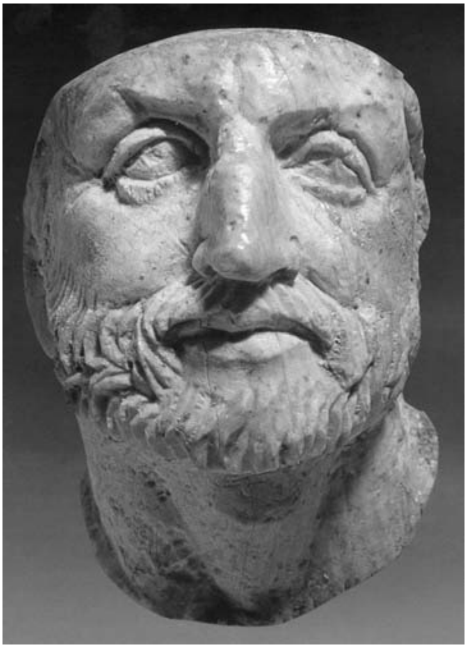


Figure 3.5 Ivory head from the decoration of the chryselephantine bier in the main chamber of Royal Tomb II at Vergina, believed to be Philip II. Courtesy of Mrs Olympia Andronikou-Kakoulidou

ties of marriage. We will return to the situation that multiple marriages produced in examining the role of Olympias, mother of Alexander, later in this chapter. At this point, it is valuable to note that the most significant factor in every case was diplomatic: Philip built or reinforced alliances with important families in other parts of Macedonia, with leaders of rival kingdoms or states, and with another branch of the Argead line. True affection may have played a role in some instances but it was not the initial motivation.

Many additional threats hovered ominously. Claimants to the kingship remained: Argaios, probably the person who had replaced Amyntas III as king for a brief period in the 380s, reappeared with Athenian support to regain the throne. Philip dealt with the

pretender and his force without difficulty. Ever ready to explode were regions of upper Macedonia; in addition there were pressures from the Thracians to the east, Paionians in the north, Greek states on the very borders of Macedonia, as well as more distant, powerful poleis, particularly Athens and Thebes. Negotiation coupled with monetary gifts brought settlements with the Paionians and Thracians, a treaty with Athens occurred in 359, and marriage with one Thessalian woman occurred probably in 358. In that same year, force was employed successfully against the Paionians and, later, the Illyrians. This combination of diplomacy and force was the pattern for the rest of Philip's career.

There is sufficient evidence to review in detail the 23 years of Philip's reign. A map of the boundaries of the kingdom by 336 shows plainly Macedonian involvement in all directions. To paint a more general picture, however, we will follow Philip's relations as they expanded from dealings with neighboring peoples to enemies as distant as Achaemenid Persia in order to discern the general nature of Philip's tasks and the reasons for his final success in creating an expansive, imposing realm. It is important to note that the Macedonian army had to be simultaneously active in several directions to deal with enemies who were not only dangerous in themselves but habitually formed coalitions with one another against Macedon.

To the northwest, the Illyrians were a constant threat throughout Philip's reign. Although a Macedonian campaign in Illyria in 358 brought the defeat of the Illyrian king and 7,000 of his troops, two years later the Illyrians had allied with other northern enemies of Macedon, namely the Thracians and Paionians; from the Greek sphere, Athens also joined the coalition. More than twenty years later, the year of Philip's death included a campaign against the Illyrians. Although they were not pacified, Philip's containment of the threat of their ongoing incursions into upper and lower Macedonia may well have been crucial to the absence of hostility from the once-independent regions of upper Macedonia throughout his reign. Epiros, also to the west, was more easily drawn into

the Macedonian sphere in 357 by alliance with the ruling Aiacid family and marriage to Olympias, the daughter of the king. On the eastern front, Thrace would occupy Macedonian troops on a regular basis into the late 340s. It is misleading to speak of Thrace as a single entity; rather there were several groups of Thracians led by chieftains who fought one another or, at times, allied against a foreign enemy or found it useful to forge ties with more distant peoples. Only toward the end of his career would it be possible for Philip to look beyond Thrace into Skythia.

In dealing with the Greek states, he began his incursions into the region closest to the kingdom's borders, Thessaly, in 358. Two of his marriages can be connected with these early incursions: in 358 to Philinna from the ruling family of Larisa, situated in the north of Thessaly, and six years later to Nikesipolis of Pherai in southern Thessaly. Despite these alliances, Thessaly would require further campaigns into the 340s. In 357 Philip also turned his attention to Greek states in the northern Aegean – the long-established poleis on the Chalkidian peninsula and Athenian colonies or allies on the Macedonian coast itself, as well as east of the Chalkidian peninsula. Gradually, the Macedonian–Athenian quarrel would draw Philip and his forces further east into the eastern Aegean and the Propontis, where an Athenian presence was strong.

On the Greek mainland, increasing success in Thessaly toward the end of the 350s provided Philip with another official position, that of *tagos*, leader of the military levies of all four regions of Thessaly, thereby empowering him to act formally in the affairs of Thessaly. Hostility from poleis to the east drew the Macedonians into Greek affairs in the Chalkidike, where Philip captured the center of the Chalkidian League at Olynthos in 348. Similar victories in other parts of the northern Aegean effectively brought the Chalkidike into the Macedonian sphere. Not surprisingly, southern Greeks with interests in the northern Aegean readied to protect those interests.

At the same time, certain Greek poleis believed that the Macedonian army might be a tool in their own behalf, aiding the cause

of one party in the never-ending wars between the poleis. Early in the 340s the Macedonian army was drawn by invitation into Greek civil war in central Greece. Known as the Sacred War, it pitted against one another the 12 members of the long-established body that served as guardians of the sacred site of Delphi, the Delphic Amphiktyony. In retaliation for a heavy fine charged by the other members of the Amphiktyony, the hoplites of the state of Phokis, aided by mercenaries, had seized Delphi and its wealth in 356, provoking warfare throughout central Greece for a decade. An invitation to Philip to help deal with the culprit brought the Macedonian army into central Greece in 347; in the following year, the Phokians surrendered. The victor – Philip – gained another official role in Greek affairs through membership in the long-standing council of the Delphic Amphiktyony.

During the remainder of the decade, Philip turned his attention again to Illyria, campaigning against the Illyrian king; he arranged a political settlement in Thessaly; led his army to Epiros in the west and Thrace in the east, advancing into Skythia; entered new alliances such as the agreement with the king of the Getai; and founded colonies. From southern Greece embassies arrived to negotiate agreements; Messenia and Megalopolis in the Peloponnese, for example, were invited to join the Delphic Amphiktyony alongside the other Greek states and Philip.

At the same time, however, Philip pressed on to strengthen Macedonian presence in the Black Sea. In 340, he laid siege to Perinthos and Selymbria, Greek poleis neighboring Byzantium, which he also attacked. Athens declared war and began to lobby other Greeks to take a coordinated stand against Macedon. When fighting in central Greece flared again early in the 330s, Philip led his Macedonian troops back to Greece as both Macedonian king and Greek official of the Delphic Amphiktyonic Council. Believing that his objectives were grander than defeat of a single, relatively small polis, the Athenians spearheaded the formation of a coalition headed by Athens and Thebes along with Euboians, Achaians, Corinthians, Megarians, Leukadians, and Korkyrians. Greek and Macedonian

armies of roughly similar numbers (30,000–35,000) met on the plain at Chaironeia in central Greece in the summer of 338.

The Macedonian victory was decisive beyond the military result. It allowed Philip to reorganize the nature of Greek governance. Philip first made formal treaties with his enemies at Chaironeia, in accord with their differing histories of relationships with Macedon. Some, like Thebes, were garrisoned; others experienced a change of government; certain poleis, such as Athens, were granted nominal independence. Philip then turned to long-term political settlements. Arrangements with individual states and regions prepared the ground for a new collective organization of Greece. The boundaries of states were fixed, reputedly on the grounds of justifications prepared for Philip by Aristotle. With recognized borders, the causes of warfare between states might be removed. Just as significant was the subtle balance created as major powers were weakened while weaker states were strengthened. All states – large and small – were then united in a new league: the League of Corinth was both an offensive and a defensive alliance. States were to remain autonomous, but the power struggles of the past two centuries were eliminated. Each member would send delegates to a general council, the number of delegates dependent upon the importance of the state. Philip would be *hegemon* of the League. To ensure military strength against foreign enemies, no citizen was allowed to serve with a foreign power against Philip or the League, an element that was essential in the announced offensive of a campaign against Persia, in preparation for which Philip dispatched an advance force in 336.

The outcome of the contest at Chaironeia – both military and diplomatic – in comparison with the defeat of the Macedonian troops led by Philip's elder brother Perdikkas at the hands of the Illyrians in 359 is a mark of Philip's brilliance. Another mark is the territorial size of the kingdom at over 16,600 square miles (over 43,000 km^2), more than double the size it had been at the end of the Peloponnesian War. A third mark is the unification of once-independent, quite varied regions under a ruler who now wore several insignia of his power.

The foundations of Philip's successes

It was essential not only to rebuild but also to expand Macedonian military capability in order to have any chance of dealing with the constant threats of invasion and rebellion. The army that Philip inherited included foot-soldiers and cavalry; the former element, we have argued, had been enhanced a century earlier by Alexander I, and the latter remained a prerogative of the elite. However, the size of neither contingent was large. Perdikkas had lost 4,000 men in battle with the Illyrians in 359; Philip needed to repair that loss and to raise an even large force in anticipation of a new Illyrian invasion as well as threats from other neighboring peoples. He seems to have had a force of about 10,000 in 358. At Chaironeia in 338, he commanded an army of 30,000–35,000, as we have seen, an increase that became easier to create as more territories and their populations were annexed to the Macedonian kingdom. For example, of that number, his cavalry had grown from approximately 600 at the start of his reign to 3,000 by its end, in part due to his success in Thessaly, which brought the most effective cavalry force of Greece into the Macedonian army.

Not simply numbers but training and organization seem to have been altered early in Philip's kingship. That he had in mind the changes he would initiate even before becoming king is likely. His enforced stay in Thebes had occurred at the time that the reformed Theban phalanx was producing an extensive empire. Similarities are obvious between the hoplite army of fourth-century Thebes created by Pelopidas and Epaminondas and that of Philip. In both armies, hoplites carried a longer pike but a lighter shield than traditional hoplites, and perhaps omission of a breast plate made them faster and more mobile. In battle, units of 250 to 300 men were positioned in 16-deep files. Crack troops were important in both Theban and Macedonian formations. In Thebes, a "sacred band" of 150 pairs of lovers formed a special unit, while in Macedon 3,000 royal foot-soldiers were the elite infantry. Beyond the innovations he had seen as a teenage hostage in Thebes, Philip utilized other inherited

features in new ways. While deploying the best troops on the left wing, he protected them by cavalry on the flank. And he increased the use of light infantry – archers, slingers, and peltasts (light-armed skirmishers) – while also utilizing some of the cavalry as scouts.

There is evidence to show that he encouraged an army "career" by inducements. For instance, moving from ordinary foot-soldier to hypaspist (that is, one of the shield-bearing guards of the king) brought greater compensation as well as higher honor. Another inducement is that the king himself led his army in the field; it was not a delegated responsibility, although as action in separate directions became more and more common, some authority in the field had to be entrusted to subordinates. The twin bond between the foot-soldiers and the king could serve a political end as well as military need. As all Macedonian kings, Philip inherited a socio-economic structure in which aristocratic families in addition to the Argead line enjoyed significant status and wealth. Especially in those once-independent kingdoms of upper Macedonia, the heads of these families could lay claim to a position similar to that of the Argead king. Winning the cooperation of such figures was a consuming task that many Argead kings could not achieve, as the reign of Philip's father, Amyntas III, reveals. Philip's expansion of the number and status of foot-soldiers may well have been a buttress of royal power against aristocratic inroads.

And he may have gained another means of building a royal base of the support of men in command positions as new territory was added to the Macedonian kingdom. Some scholars have argued that conquered land became royal land that could be granted to individuals for their use in return for the performance of obligations in kind. Certainly this was the perspective of Alexander III and his successors. Evidence exists of land grants to entice to Macedonia foreigners – like Nearchos of Crete – who were interested in a following a professional military career. But not all of Philip's companions and officers were new recruits; he continued to rely – as he had to – on the heads of privileged families for major responsibilities. That they served him well in return for incentives similar

to those of new recruits is evidenced by their survival to become supporters of Alexander and, immediately thereafter, of Alexander's own subalterns on the death of Philip.

Newly won territory strengthened Philip's resource base in other important ways. Added territory brought greater population, livestock, and natural resources. The acquired land could be used to found or refound settlements in the vicinity of valuable resources to provide control over them and workers to exploit them. New settlements for Macedonians would have the further advantage of being loyal centers in what were formerly non-Macedonian regions. As early as 356, Philip consolidated several settlements to create Philippoi in the northern Aegean, just westward of Thracian holdings. The ores of the Mt. Pangaion region brought 1,000 talents each year to the royal treasury, while the settlement itself advertised a Macedonian presence in what then was still no-man's-land between Macedon and Thrace. When the Macedonians made inroads into Thrace itself, garrisons were established in remote areas; settlements at Beroi and Philippopolis became important centers of Macedonian control and influence. Three or four years after the creation of the first Philippoi, Philip's activities in Thessaly produced the colony at Gomphoi, renamed either Philippoi or Philippopolis. Westward, too, military fortresses were planted in the mountain passages. Understanding the value of colonies through the existence of Greek colonies in the immediate vicinity of the kingdom, Philip claimed long-established settlements for similar purposes. As his successes took in the Greek settlements on the Macedonian coast and in the Chalkidike peninsula, Philip was free to trade directly by sea without having recourse to intermediaries. And in gaining the harbors, he added harbor dues to his treasury.

As his involvement in new and different regions of the Aegean expanded, Philip realized the importance of technology. Early connections with Thessaly brought the services of one Polyeides, who is credited with new and more straightforward mechanical designs. What has been described as "Philip's department of mechanical engineering" may have been established at Pella, where Polyeides

implemented his designs and also trained students who would later serve Alexander. While the evidence is not full, there is no doubt that Philip employed arrow-firing catapults, and perhaps torsion engines were developed during his reign. For sieges, Philip's army had the aid of towers as high as 120 feet (over 36 m), rams, and scaling ladders.

This and the various "departments" of a centralized administrative structure were essential to the creation and maintenance of a strong kingdom. Evidence for the nature of this structure is meager inasmuch as written information from Macedonia during the fourth century through the reign of Philip is scarce. Yet there is archaeological evidence, surviving Greek records from these years are informative, and clues exist in the domestic and state circumstances that are known.

Pella had become the node of the kingdom, perhaps as early as the reign of Archelaos (413–399); under Philip, the city expanded. Since it continued to be the capital of the Macedonian kingdom into the Hellenistic period, much of the fourth-century site was overbuilt and, thus, has not been located and excavated. Still, the general plan of the city is relatively clear. At the center of the city was an agora of more than 17 acres (7 hectares) through which a large street – part of the royal road – crossed. A stoa surrounded the agora. The north portion of the stoa had an administrative character while the southwest portion was an archive. Other parts of the complex housed shops and workshops. Administrative units are likely to have been located in parts of the stoa. In addition to the archive, the secretariat staff would have required offices. A fair amount of the treasury would be dispersed from the capital; its management and storage would have occupied another unit. "Departments" where weapons, other military equipment, and siege machinery were designed and produced may have been housed in one area of the extensive stoa.

The palace, situated on a hill to the north of the agora, covers nearly 15 acres (6 hectares). Around a large central courtyard are three separate complexes, each one opening onto a large courtyard.

One of the units had a swimming pool and another may have been a palaistra or exercise ground. Their several uses can be deduced from written accounts of life at Pella. A good portion of the space would be needed for the residence of Philip, his seven wives and their children, other relatives, and the considerable household staff these numbers would entail. Visiting envoys arrived regularly for audiences with the Macedonian king; space would be allotted to their needs while in Pella and also to suitable areas for meetings with the king and members of his staff. A portion of Philip's cadre of subordinates would also be present at any time; the young men of aristocratic families who were sent to the royal domain for training as future leaders and who were, in effect, in service to the king during these years of training. The famous symposia of the Macedonians called for special furnishings and other equipment, not to mention storage of the quantities of wine consumed. Suitable space for great occasions like weddings and recognition of honors given to Philip himself would also be present in the palace. Elaborate mosaic floors, wall paintings by the Greek artist Zeuxis (attracted to Macedon during the reign of Archelaos), and elegant objects found at Pella and other centers show that care was taken and wealth was invested to create a fair degree of splendor. Sanctuaries, such as the circular area dedicated to Demeter, and cemeteries were also part of the urban landscape of Pella in the fourth century. It is unclear how early Pella was fortified; present evidence dates to the last part of the fourth century.

Many of the features of Pella were anticipated at the older capital of Aigai. That Pella may have been fortified early in the fourth century is suggested by the plan of Aigai. It is useful to note that the residential and administrative center of the old capital had been sited on an acropolis that would inhibit access by unwelcome visitors. In addition, the center was fortified with a wall of carefully constructed masonry. A gate on the east side was protected by a round tower. The palace had residential quarters, large rooms for official functions, and workshops. Surviving mosaics and architectural features indicate both the wealth and the care invested in

construction. Integral to Aigai were the theatre at the foot of the acropolis and the sanctuary of Eukleia, mentioned above in connection with the mother of Philip. Burials together with surviving offerings reaching back to the heroön associated with Alexander I are indicative of the rising power of the Argead kings, which in turn fueled the need for the centralization of activities and the breadth of cultural contacts. In sum, while Pella demonstrates a magnification of these same features, it did not emerge *de novo*.

Nevertheless, the power emanating from Pella during the reign of Philip II is described by first-hand witnesses. Surviving Greek accounts, particularly those of the Athenians Demosthenes, Isokrates, and Aischines, are proof that Philip was adept at winning by diplomatic means as well as military might, both skills demanded of Argead rulers from the origin of the small kingdom. Macedonian kings before the time of Philip negotiated and concluded treaties and alliances in their own names. An inscription discussing the treaty between Perdikkas II and the Athenians reads, "Now in those oaths and treaties which bind this same Perdikkas and those kings with Perdikkas . . ." Later, "[I]t was agreed by Amyntas the son of Arridaios and the Chalkidians to be allies of one another against all men for fifty years." Philip entered into similar alliances from his first years as king. To be sure, the king was the natural representative of his kingdom and presumably acted in the best interests of Macedonian welfare. However, there appears to have been no official body apart from the king to arrange such negotiations. Consequently, this feature of rule appears to have been a royal prerogative. The growing importance of cementing new alliances through marriage is another element of Macedonian diplomacy that appears to be confined to the Argead rulers. The purpose of most, perhaps all, of Philip's seven marriages can be understood, at least partly, in this light. Moreover, the number of his marriages is a sign of the rapidly expanding role of Macedon in the larger sphere of the northeastern Mediterranean.

In addition to diplomatic skills and the acquisition of official positions, another useful trait in a successful king was a capacity for

subterfuge. Accounts indicate that Philip was especially adept at ruses, for example employing false messages meant to be intercepted by the enemy. To gain an advantageous position for his cavalry in the battle that eventually occurred on the plain of Chaironeia in 338, he "allowed" a dispatch of his to be intercepted by the Greek enemy. Information in the dispatch revealed that he was about to withdraw from his current position. On that welcome news, the enemy forces relaxed, and that same night Philip and his Macedonians burst through a narrow gap in the mountains to achieve their desired position. He had sent a similar false dispatch the previous year when his fleet had been driven into the Black Sea and pinned there by the enemy fleet. The instructions in the message served to divert the commanders of the enemy fleet sufficiently so that the Macedonian ships could escape. He was masterful, too, at dividing his enemies from one another and in supporting pro-Macedonian groups in Greece. Military strength went hand in hand with, and was enhanced by, other tactics.

A combination of these skills allowed Philip to add other official positions to his Macedonian kingship. In Thessaly, he became *tagos* in 352, a position attested as early as the sixth century, which can be defined as a means to draw the four largely independent regions of Thessaly into cooperative action in situations that demanded a greater force than a single region could mount. It is likely that a "federal" *tagos* was initially elected for a temporary emergency only but that the growth of larger coalitions in Greece generally in the fifth and fourth centuries converted the position into a permanent office. In the hands of Philip the *tagia* would provide the basis for the reorganization of Thessaly in 344. Macedonian settlement of the inter-polis warfare in central Greece in 346 brought with it another official position for the Macedonian king: in defeating the rogue polis of Phokis, Philip was awarded its two votes in the Council of 12 member states that oversaw the security of Delphi. He was also invited to organize the new Pythian games and he began the construction of the Philippeion at Olympia's Altis. More than guarding the sacred site, its members could take concerted action to preserve that security.

More impressive, however, was Philip's creation of a new league, the League of Corinth, with himself as its leader, or *hegemon*. Coming in the wake of the Macedonian victory at Chaironeia in 338, it was an expression of Macedonian power over the Greek states. It was also an attempt to create a new order within Greece in which Macedon and its king would be an integral part. Arranging settlements with individual Greek states was an essential first step. The boundaries of states were defined, probably with the assistance of Aristotle and members of his school, in order to remove a major cause of discord in Greece. In the process of determining both the territory and the status of specific states, Philip rewarded some and treated others more severely on the basis of previous relations with Macedon. Thebes, for example, was garrisoned while the Aitolians were given the strategic site of Naupaktos on the Corinthian gulf. Athens was treated generously in spite of its leading role in the struggle against Philip; Sparta was essentially ignored. As we shall explore below, Philip was familiar with treaty-making in the Greek world, in fact he was already party to several alliances: the long-established Delphic Amphictyony; a Common Offense and Defense Treaty (*symmachy*, fighting together) with the Chalkidian League; the Common Peace agreement between Philip and his allies and Athens and its allies known as the Peace of Philokrates. He employed these familiar practices in building his new alliance, which combined a Common Peace treaty with a *symmachy*.

After reaching the individual accords, a governing council was created of delegates from the allied states. Decisions were taken regarding joint action in the council, which also served as a court to arbitrate disputes and to take action against any who violated the decrees of the League. Its *hegemon* – Philip – was both the chief official and commander-in-chief of the league. Delegates from the member states gathered at Corinth for a conference in the winter of 338/7; of the major states, Sparta sent no delegates. Philip announced a Common Peace of which Macedon would be guarantor. In the realization that force would be needed to maintain the peace, a synod of representatives from all member states was established: votes were allotted according to the military strength of the

states. A surviving inscription (Tod ii 177.17–22) describes the oath sworn by members: "If anyone shall act in a way contrary to the agreements I shall give military assistance as the injured require and shall go to war against the offender against the Common Peace as the General Synod requires and the *Hegemon* orders." Thus the league was also a *symmachy*; Philip as its *hegemon* would levy a force appropriate to the task. Also included in the agreement was the acknowledgment of individual settlements that Philip had arranged following his victory at Chaironeia: boundaries had been fixed and within these boundaries the political structure of each state too was fixed. These conditions applied to Macedon as well as Greece: thus the monarchy of Philip and his descendants was simultaneously secured into the future as were the constitutions of the Greek states. Special officials – perhaps selected from members of the synod – were appointed to watch for breaches of these agreements.

One of the first acts of the synod of the League was to declare war against Persia in 337/6 at the behest of Philip. Although an advance force was dispatched to northwestern Anatolia, Philip did not live to undertake the full campaign. If such a campaign were to occur, it would be the work of his successor.

The accomplishments of Philip II

Demosthenes is said to have described Philip as the most clever or frightening of men. The Greek word *deinos* carries both meanings. In more prosaic terms, we can summarize his accomplishments militarily, diplomatically, and personally to gain a fuller understanding of the man who would succeed him.

Coming to power in the wake of a disastrous defeat that took the life of his brother, then king, and 4,000 men, Philip created a stable kingdom of Macedon. He was able to reaffirm control of regions that had effectively broken away from the kingdom during the first four decades of the fourth century and then add large amounts of new territory. His successes more than doubled the

territorial size of the kingdom from its extent at the end of the Peloponnesian War. Population in the region effectively controlled also increased dramatically, from approximately 228,000 at the end of the fifth century to approximately 700,000 during the reign of Philip II. Beyond size, the mechanisms of central authority were strengthened: the army was reformed and allegiance to the king tightened; investment in roads, fortresses, and new settlements in conquered territory enhanced the likelihood of continuing control from Pella; royal management of resources provided the means for these steps.

In expanding the size and durability of his kingdom, Philip extended the Macedonian sphere of influence to encompass Greece, Thrace, and Illyria and Epiros on the Adriatic coast. Deft diplomatic skills won supporters even among the Greeks and further provided him with official positions in venerable, important bodies. He knew Greek institutions well enough to model new bodies of his own creation upon those institutions. A facility in arranging treaties often supported by marriage with a daughter of the other party served Philip well.

The historian Diodoros Sikulos praises Philip's personal excellence, his bravery, and "the brilliance of his personality" (XVI.1.6). Philip led his troops in battle, receiving wounds to prove that he fought among the forefront, such as the loss of an eye in battle at Methoni. He dealt with his subordinates directly in matters of both war and administration, gathering essential services and resources around him at the capital of Pella. He played a direct role in the councils of his major officials and also in the frequent, grand-scale symposia and at celebrations accompanying great occasions.

On his death in 336, he was readying the resources of his kingdom and allies in the League of Corinth to make further inroads – this time eastward into the territory of the Persian Empire.

It hardly needs stating that Philip was far more than part of Alexander's world; he constructed the shape and form of that world. Macedon was a vast kingdom with an army and organization that augured durability. From Illyria to Thrace and from Paionia to southern Greece, former enemies had been brought to heel.

Military success was based on a reconstituted, restructured army whose loyalty to its leader – the Macedonian king – had been strengthened by instituting a system of recruiting sons of aristocratic Macedonian families, peasants who were keen to exchange their shepherding for soldiering, and non-Macedonian career soldiers. Pella was becoming the hub of activities essential to a well-organized state. Outside of Macedon itself, Philip created new forms of alliance with once-independent regions, and in those alliances he became the directing force. His success was making Pella an international hub of energy.

In this transformation of Macedonian power, Philip was a model of what an Argead king might accomplish. The successor to such a person would have to be an equally impressive man. Philip had fashioned an inheritance for the next Argead king far superior to the one he had received in 359. But he had also raised the level of personal and professional skills that were now necessary to maintain the effectiveness of the kingdom.

Olympias

The other half of Alexander's parentage was equally remarkable: his mother shaped her son's career in ways well beyond her gift of life. Her marriage to Philip was an essential element of the alliance between Epiros and Macedon that allied two ruling families through peaceful rather than military means. As we have seen, however, Philip made six other diplomatic marriages, producing what can be seen as a competitive environment in which wives would strive to ensure their own positions and the future success of their children. A mother would have to safeguard herself and her sons and daughters during their infancy and youth, fashioning conditions in which they could develop and demonstrate capabilities to succeed to the throne or to become the wife of a powerful man. It was not an easy task under the best circumstances, but for Alexander's mother it was even more difficult, for she was not an Argead.



Figure 3.6 Ivory head from the decoration of the chryselephantine bier in the main chamber of Royal Tomb II at Vergina, believed to be Olympias. Courtesy of Mrs Olympia Andronikou-Kakoulidou

Alexander's mother was Olympias, although her given name may have been Mytale. She was not Macedonian by birth but from Epiros, the northwest region of Greece on the mainland opposite Corfu, roughly adjacent to Thessaly albeit separated from Thessaly by the Pindos mountains. The fourth-century historian Theopompos listed 14 tribes as inhabitants of the region. One of the 14 was that of the Molossians, who succeeded in forming a strong state under their king Neoptolemos by c. 370. Olympias was one of three children of Neoptolemos. She had a sister, Thoas, and a brother, Alexander, who became king of the Molossians in 342, after

which he succeeded in creating an expanded unification of Epiros during his 12-year reign. Philip's marriage to Olympias can be dated to approximately 357; their son was born in 356 and their daughter, Kleopatra, some two or three years later. The union was arranged between Philip and the uncle of Olympias who had succeeded her father as king.

Several mutual benefits encouraged the marriage. Ongoing Macedonian difficulties with the Illyrians, north of Epiros, suggest that the utility of having a friendly ally on the southern limits of Illyrian territory was a significant factor. The relationship between Macedon and Epiros was amicable rather than bellicose, and it was further cemented by a marriage alliance in 337 between the daughter of Philip and Olympias, Kleopatra, and Olympias' brother, Alexander, now king of Molossia. Strong Hellenic influence was another bond between the two kingdoms by the 350s. Molossians, at least the elite, were Greek speakers and traced their ancestry to Achilles' son Neoptolemos in a manner similar to the Argead link with Herakles. Plutarch's report that Philip fell in love with Olympias when they both were being initiated into religious ceremonies on the Greek island of Samothrace may indicate the level of hellenization in both Epiros and lower Macedonia by the mid-fourth century (*Alexander* I). Clearly, for Plutarch at any rate, it demonstrated that a diplomatic marriage could include personal affection.

Whether or not there was an amorous element to the marriage, it is important to remember that Olympias was but one of Philip's seven wives. Although the order of the marriages is not entirely certain, by the time of the union with Olympias he had three other wives: Audata, daughter of the Illyrian king; Phila, a member of the ruling family of Elimeia in upper Macedonia; and Philinna, of an important Thessalian ruling family. Late in his career he would marry three times; to the Thessalian Nikesipolis of Pherai; to Thracian Meda; and to Kleopatra of Macedon, perhaps an Argead or, if not of the royal line, a member of a noble Macedonian family. Sources report that this was a match based on love, but as we have seen a king must ensure good relations with the elite of his kingdom.

A wife's ancestry does not appear to have been a decisive factor in the matter of succession. Philip's mother Eurydike was of Illyrian and Lynkestian blood, while Gygaia, his father's second wife, may have been a member of the Argead clan. Eurydike's sons became the successors of their father; the sons of Gygaia conspired to take the kingship for themselves. In similar fashion, Olympias was Epirote while Philip's seventh wife was a member of an influential Macedonian family. Decision about the succession, then, was dependent on other factors than membership in the Argead clan; the mothers' relative influence with Philip was surely of major significance. While clear signs of capability in potential heirs would also be determinative, each mother of a son of Philip can be seen as striving to advance her child's skills. One way to do that might be causing damage to the chances of rivals.

Where in the palace complex Olympias and Philip's other wives lived is not known. Perhaps one of the three wings was intended for domestic quarters. Even if the several wives and their children had separate quarters, the situation was certain to produce competition. As we have seen, Macedonian culture was deeply competitive in many respects. The role of Eurydike in securing succession for her sons rather than those of Gygaia indicates that the wives and daughters of elite families acted in similar fashion to Macedonian males. The roles of Olympias and her daughter, also named Kleopatra, demonstrate that women could rule in the absence of kings, could lead armies, could take the lives of rivals.

While the initial purpose of the multiple marriages of Philip and other Macedonian kings was their value in forging alliances with other states, a second purpose became equally important, namely ensuring a line of heirs to the throne of Macedon. Philip had strong evidence that the life of a Macedonian king was insecure: his father and two older brothers had been killed and he had a potential rival in his nephew. As we have seen, one of his first tasks as king was to eliminate other potential rivals, particularly his father's sons by Gygaia. He was surely aware, also, that many infants did not survive their first years through natural causes. Consequently, a primary

responsibility of royal wives was to bear sons and to keep them alive. The second half of the responsibility was difficult even if there were only two wives, as in the case of Philip's father, Amyntas. Such a contest among the seven wives of Philip produced a far more intricate situation.

Furthermore, it demonstrates another characteristic of Olympias. Dedication to her two children and determination to ensure their success is a prominent trait in the account of her life from the birth of her first child, Alexander, to the time of her own death in 315. She is said to have given drugs to Philip Arrhidaios, the other potential successor to Philip, in order to impair his mind as well as his body (Plutarch, *Alexander* LXXVII). At the time of Philip's seventh and last marriage, to Kleopatra in 337, the quarrel that ensued between Philip and Alexander led to the departure from Macedonia of both Olympias and Alexander. A reconciliation occurring in the following year was accompanied by the marriage of the daughter of Olympias and Philip, Kleopatra, to her uncle, the brother of Olympias.

After Philip's murder in 336 and Alexander's acclamation as king, Olympias and her daughter exercised considerable power in both Molossia and Macedon when Alexander was campaigning against Persia. Olympias managed to survive the brutal decade that Alexander's death produced, acting in concert with her daughter Kleopatra and endeavoring to keep her grandson by Alexander and Roxane, Alexander IV, alive so that he might succeed his father. To do so required the elimination of other candidates. Olympias bears responsibility for the death of Philip's seventh wife and her infant shortly after Philip's murder. In the period following Alexander's death she acted in concert with another would-be successor of Alexander, Kassandros, to put to death Philip Arrhidaios and his wife. Olympias eventually died at the hands of this same co-conspirator. Alexander IV and his mother were allowed to leave another five years before they were dispatched. Her daughter survived longer, although living as a hostage in Asia Minor, until c. 309.

Achieving success in raising adept and clever children may have been a full-time task. Evidence does not suggest that women played

a formal role in the governance of the kingdom. It may be that the informal power of the king's mother often increased during the reign of her son. The Athenian statesman-orator Aischines testified that Eurydike – the wife of Amyntas III and the mother of Philip II – had persuaded the Athenian general Iphikrates to safeguard the throne for her two surviving sons after the murder of her eldest son, Alexander (*On the Embassy* II.26–9). Evidence of Olympias' influence on Philip may be found in Philip's elevation of her brother Alexander to the Molossian throne.

Olympias, like Eurydike, played a more visible role during the reign of her son, Alexander. Early in that reign the deaths of Philip's last wife and her infant were motivated, at least in part, by Olympias' desire to secure the *basileia* for her son. Once Alexander had marched against Persia, Olympias and Kleopatra were powerful in their own names. Although Alexander allotted the regency of Macedon to Antipatros after 334, Plutarch's account has Olympias and Kleopatra intriguing against Antipatros: Plutarch states that they "had divided the kingdom between them" (LXVIII.3). Letters purported to have been written by Olympias and Alexander to one another would indicate, if genuine, a lasting bond between them, although whether it was one of affection or of mutual need cannot be known. Olympias is reported to have made an offering at Delphi of the spoils of war sent by her son. Along with her daughter, she undertook public matters in her own name both in Macedon and in Epiros. An inscription (*Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* ix 2) lists recipients of grain from Kyrene in north Africa: all but two of those listed are states, but Olympias and Kleopatra are listed by name, a situation not unlike the evidence from treaties where the Macedonian king is named as one of the parties.

Even without the umbrella of Alexander's support, Olympias continued to be a major player in events after the death of her adversary Antipatros in 319. Returning to Macedonia from Epiros in 317, she assumed protection of her grandson, Alexander IV, attempting to secure the throne for him alone rather than continuing the division of power settled upon in Babylon, which shared the rule

between Alexander IV and Philip Arrhidaios. The Macedonians cast their lot with Olympias and Alexander IV, perhaps out of affection for the son of Alexander III but also impressed with the powerful figure of Olympias herself. Inasmuch as the young king Alexander was barely six years of age, Olympias determined the course of action, which began with the deaths of Arrhidaios and his wife, a granddaughter of Philip II through his Illyrian wife Audata. It is reported that Olympias also brought about the deaths of a hundred supporters of the son of Antipatros, Kassandros, and of one of Kassandros' brothers, certain opponents to the nemesis of their father. In 315 Olympias was forced to surrender to the same Kassandros, and her own death followed shortly thereafter.

On the estimate that Olympias was 16 or 17 at the time of her marriage to Philip, she was nearly 70 during the efforts on behalf of her son's son. That information offers some insight into her nature and personality. She was in full possession of her physical and mental capacities, honed no doubt by the nature of life in Epiros and Macedonia as well as by the struggle to keep herself and her children alive and make them suitable candidates for succession, in the case of Alexander, or important marriage, in the case of Kleopatra.

Her sense of power may well have been enhanced by her religious convictions. Plutarch's references to Olympias describe how, like many women in "this region," she was an initiate of both the Orphic and Dionysiac cults. Recalling that Euripides' tragedy the *Bakkhai* was inspired by events during the poet's stay in Macedonia may confirm the general correctness of Olympias' association with Dionysiac rites. Plutarch continues, "It was Olympias' habit to enter into these states of possession and surrender herself to the inspiration of the god with even wilder abandon than the others, and she would introduce into the festal procession numbers of large snakes, hand-tamed, which terrified the male spectators" (*Alexander* II). One night, Philip is said to have discovered one such snake stretched out at Olympias' side as she slept (*Alexander* II). She is reported to have told Alexander the truth of his conception: "that her womb

was struck by a thunderbolt, and that there followed a blinding flash from a great sheet of flame."

It is likely that she was proud of her family's descent from the son of Achilles, Neoptolemos, and reminded her son and daughter of their heroic lineage. She might well have reinforced this and other information in writing even when apart from her children. The accounts of her correspondence with Alexander while he was on campaign indicate her own formal education in literacy, something that can be expected among members of ruling families in hellenized Epiros and Macedon.

In sum, Olympias was a powerful figure in two royal families. Since Macedonian royal women held no formal, recognized positions of authority, her power would derive from personal qualities and accomplishments. Especially in the disturbed situation created by the murder of Philip, then at Alexander's departure to the east, and in the chaos in the wake of his death, royal women might well exercise greater power, even if they held no titled position. The political worlds of Olympias and Kleopatra offered unusual opportunities. In Molossia, Kleopatra was left as regent when her husband departed for an ill-fated campaign in Italy; she continued in power when he died on the venture. On the death of her husband, Kleopatra also became important as a potential wife of one of Alexander's successors. Not one of the possible husbands lived long enough to marry her.

Olympias was not sought as a wife. Rather, the struggle for Macedonian kingship opened a door for her activity as long as strong sentiment remained for continuity of rule in the line of Philip. As we have seen, she succeeded in eliminating all potential candidates other than Alexander's son. And her murder in 315 may have lessened the chances that Alexander IV would survive. By 310/9, many of the successors who had now established themselves in actual power in parts of the empire believed that they might claim the title along with the role of kingship, even without the status of Argead birth. As a consequence of this realization, the last of the line of Philip and Alexander was put to death. In 306/5 two of the successors took

the title *basileus*, king; others followed. For a time, however, the daughters of Philip were important as wives to the successors of Alexander. The aura of the Argead women was still strong. It is feasible to agree with Elizabeth Carney that "Olympias' long career was a kind of watershed: before her royal Macedonian women were virtually invisible, while after her, in the Hellenistic period, queens often had important roles as co-rulers and regents" (1987: 38).

Olympias' impact on Alexander

It may be interesting to recall that while Alexander's visit to the oracle of Ammon-Zeus at Siwah in Egypt is reported to have given him the identity of his true father, namely Zeus, the name of his mother was never in doubt. Beyond the gift of life, Olympias enabled her son to survive through infancy and to become the likely successor to Philip II. Part of her gift was accomplished through her deliberate actions, perhaps impairing the mental and physical abilities of Philip's only other son. Other aspects of her gift were determined for her, and thus for her son, by circumstances.

One circumstance was that his early years would have been spent largely in the environment of a royal compound at Pella that was wrought with tension. No gauge exists to measure how much of the atmosphere was perceived by Alexander in his youth, but he was not isolated from others of the royal family. Nor is Olympias likely to have been silent on the situation. That she and Alexander were jointly involved in the ongoing competition is indicated by their self-exile from Pella at the time of Philip's marriage to Kleopatra. Even though marriage was a tool of diplomacy, the wives of the king did not need to be passive creatures, nor did the situation encourage passivity.

Growing up in the palace at Pella brought important opportunities: connection with elite children of his own age – the king's boys (youthful sons of princely houses) and families who had taken refuge at Pella, such as that of Artabazos, a satrap of the Persian king, whose daughter Barsine was a near contemporary of Alexander. The

palace was also the location of symposia, attended by the elite, and the scene of embassies. While not participating until he reached maturity, Alexander would have known of these occasions. And as he grew older, he would have participated in them and, moreover, become familiar with the activities in the lower city at Pella as well as with those carrying them out.

Olympias added to Alexander's heroic ancestry through her family's descent from the line of Achilles, making her son the heir of the mightiest hero at Troy as well as the Greek hero of impossible tasks, Herakles. His mother's devotion to the cult of Dionysos was another powerful source of inspiration throughout Alexander's campaign. To these elements, it is safe to add Olympias' probable influence on her son's formal training in both literacy and an appreciation of Greek cultural elements, which were significant in Epiros as well as in Macedon.

As a result of the maternal role of Olympias, Alexander can be seen as having a conception of his heroic lineage; some difficulties over the role of marriage; knowledge that the world of the Argeads was fraught with competition, and while friends were welcome they could not always be trusted; and the recognition that to succeed to the *basileia* required mental agility combined with physical stamina and complemented by a great variety of tools. He owed a large debt to Olympias and probably feared her as much as he welcomed her care of his very life.

4
Being a Neighbor of Greece

Greece was only one of many troublesome neighbors of the Macedonians. However, the Greeks posed special problems. Most noticeable was their multiple nature: since the Archaic Age, small communities had taken on the character of autonomous nation states. In each community, known as a polis, a larger common concern had superseded purely private interests. The bond between members and the polis was tight: the needs and interests of members of each polis grew from their relationship to the compact territory of the state and to each other.

A driving intent was to make each polis self-sufficient, a difficult task in mountainous Greece. Consequently, pushing into the territory of adjacent poleis was a natural recourse. A recent inventory lists 1,035 poleis constantly jockeying for more land and greater power. As we have seen, Macedonia had better land and more plentiful resources than most of Greece provided. Thus Greek states, especially in the north, were likely to venture across the Haliakmon River in building a more expansive base.

But Greeks pressed on Macedonia from other directions as well. With the rise in population in the ninth and eighth centuries, the available land became even more inadequate throughout much of southern Greece. The search for livelihood elsewhere led to colonization further afield. Eventually Greek poleis would dot the west

littoral of Asia Minor, as well as the Mediterranean coast from eastern Spain to the eastern littoral of the Black Sea. Much of the earlier colonization had been nearer home: in the northern Aegean, especially on the Chalkidike peninsula, and even on the rim of the Thermaic Gulf. Macedonians found independent Greek states not only at the front gate but in their own core territory.

In another respect, too, the Greeks posed a problem: elements of the increasingly rich Greek culture were attractive to others. The adoption of hellenic elements by the Macedonians preceded the reigns of Philip and Alexander: we have suggested that first-hand knowledge of the success of the Greek phalanx in the fifth century may have spurred Alexander I to create his own force of *pezhetairoi* (foot-companions). Archelaos invited notable Greeks to his capital while continuing to institute hellenic elements into his realm, including Olympic games and dramatic contests in honor of Zeus and the Muses (Arrian I.11.1). If numerous and significant, these influences had the potential to submerge features of the traditional Macedonian way of life.

The issues surrounding the question of Macedonian ethnicity and language have been raised in chapter 2, and the rather general conclusion there was that those Macedonians who laid the foundation for the kingdom of Philip and Alexander were akin to their Indo-European neighbors in both Thrace and Greece, speaking a related language or perhaps, as some scholars believe, a dialect of Greek. It is clear, on the other hand, that political and social institutions were very different, especially in the earliest history of the Makednians, and that the material culture of Macedonia had been influenced by far more elements than Greek ones.

When the small state that would become the extensive kingdom of Philip II and Alexander III began to take shape in a narrow strip of land in Pieria and Hemathia, stretching some sixty miles (almost a hundred kilometers) from north to south during the early seventh century, the Makednians had to come to terms with Greek settlements, particularly those close to the center of the kingdom: Methone and Pydna on the west side of the Thermaic Gulf had



Map 4.1 Major Regions and Sites in the Greek Sphere

been founded by Greeks from Euboia before the end of the eighth century. They were but two of many testaments to the situation in Greece in the eighth and seventh centuries, which forced many states to establish a "home away" – *apoikia* in Greek. The increase in population coincided with the revival of seafaring, which had declined in the face of widespread destruction in the late Bronze Age. Adventurers, traders, and people in need of land for basic agricultural purposes might hope to successfully sail beyond the waters of the southern Aegean.

The coastline of the northern Aegean was one of the first areas to draw their attention: a ninth-century trading station detected at the site of Sindos is associated with Eretria on the island of Euboia. Desire for land coupled with acumen in taking trading

opportunities was vigorous on that narrow island. In the eighth century the Eretrians established settlements on the west prong of the Chalkidike peninsula, while their neighbors on Euboia – the inhabitants of Chalkis – were busy establishing colonies on the central prong of the peninsula, and others from the island of Andros were scouting for sites on the eastern peninsula. Further eastward, inhabitants of the island of Thasos were making their own new settlements on the mainland coast. The northern waters of the Aegean were, consequently, becoming a Greek sea at the same time that the Makednians were attempting to create a kingdom.

Three important consequences emerged from this cohabitation. The most general result was knowledge of one another's cultures. The Macedonians could not ignore Methone and later Pydna, situated in the heartland of Macedonia, or, eventually, slightly more distant settlements. And with knowledge, cultural influence was likely. Initially, the Greek settlements had certain advantages – knowledge of seafaring, for example, and contact with remote cultures that were far more advanced even than the Greek. Acquisition of these and other skills was facilitated by close acquaintance. Moreover, conflict over territory and the resources of the northern Aegean was predictable. The Greek colonies were sited to take advantage of good harbors to facilitate trade. If the Macedonians became more active traders themselves, disputes over the control of harbors would surely emerge. A third consequence was linked to the colonies' origins as foundations of the older, southern Greek states. Thus conflict with the poleis of southern Greece could well occur and, to anticipate, it was likely to involve much of the larger Aegean world.

Interaction between these two Eretrian colonies and the Argeads is a barometer of the vacillation of power between Greece and Macedonia. Both colonies were Greek outposts during the reigns of Amyntas I and Alexander I, but their separation from southern Greece made them useful sanctuaries for Greek leaders who had fallen out of favor with the citizens of their states: the Athenian general Themistokles was granted asylum in Pydna by Alexander I

in the 460s, indicating the Macedonian oversight of the Greek state. By the late 430s, however, Pydna had come under Athenian control. Some fifteen years later, an Athenian force landed at Methone, from which it raided the Macedonian territory in the vicinity. In another reversal, the year 410 witnessed the taking of Pydna, which had become independent, by an Athenian force allied with the Macedonian king Archelaos, who refounded Pydna as a Macedonian town 2.5 miles (4 km) inland from the coast. During the difficult decades of Macedonian history from 399 to 359, Macedonian gains evaporated. Philip II began his reconsolidation of the kingdom by taking Pydna in 357 and Methone in 354, and then turning his attention to Greek states in the western region of the Chalkidike peninsula.

Similar pressures on the land and opportunities for trade led Greeks in other directions. From Corinth, where available agricultural land was constricted and a manageable gulf lay at the state's front door, potential colonists navigated the Gulf of Corinth, then headed north along the Adriatic coast, where they founded long-lasting settlements on the island of Korkyra, and at Apollonia and Epidamnos on the mainland coast near the territories of the Illyrians and Epirotes. Cultural interaction not unlike that occurring in the northwestern Aegean began in the northeastern Adriatic long before Illyria and Epiros were incorporated into the expanded Macedonian kingdom.

Greek influence on Macedonia was much nearer: the Olympos range of mountains divides Macedonia from the southern Greek sphere but does not prevent access from south to north. Even during the Bronze Age, Mycenaean objects were imported into Macedonia, attesting trade and contact if not settlement, such as at the "Spathes" site on Petra pass. For the Iron Age, Macedonian Aigai/Vergina, noteworthy for its later lavish burials, has produced evidence of contact with the Greek world as early as the tenth and ninth centuries, perhaps again by way of Thessaly. Geographical propinquity brought more than cultural interaction; for instance, it produced alliances, as in the 380s when Thessalian aid was crucial

in the efforts of Amyntas III to regain the Macedonian kingship. And it could and did fuel mutual attempts from both sides of Olympos to dominate the territory of whichever region was currently weaker.

Geography also helps to account for the relationship between Macedonia and Greece in the early decades of the fifth century as Macedon became a player, probably an unwilling player, in the expansion of the Persian Empire. During the reign of Dareios I (522–486), the Persians turned their attention northward into Europe. About 513, Dareios led an army through Thrace, where he received the submission of many people. However, on crossing the Danube into Skythian territory he met with no success, and was forced to retrace his path through Thrace. Not long after the expedition, he appointed Megabazos to reduce the coastline of the northern Aegean from the Propontis to the Strymon River. Herodotos reports on an embassy of seven high-ranking Persians dispatched to discuss the relationship between Macedon and Persia. Alexander I, the clever son of king Amyntas I, tricked the envoys by offering them the attentions of young Macedonian women, who, beneath their heavy veils, proved to be armed Macedonian males as yet unbearded, and murdered the Persians. "That was the end of the Persian envoys to Macedon – and of their servants too; Servants, and carriages, and a great deal of luggage of every king – all disappeared together" (V.20). Herodotos also describes the careful concealing of the disappearance of the Persians and their possessions, together with the payment of a sum to the Persians and the arrangement of the marriage of Alexander's sister to the Persian officer who was investigating the affair. While Macedon does not seem to have been officially annexed to the Persian realm, it was drawn into Dareios' field of vision.

Events in the coastal region of the eastern Aegean would tighten the connection between Persia and Macedon. A serious revolt broke out in 499 on the part of the Greek states that had been subdued by the Persians in the 540s and since then were controlled by one of the western satraps of the Persian administrative system. Such was

the surprise, or perhaps unawareness, on the part of the Persians that the Persian capital in Anatolia, Sardis, was taken and burned by a coalition of Greek states in Ionian Asia Minor with aid from the mainland states of Athens and Eretria. Within five years, however, the revolt was quelled. The aftermath turned Persian attention again to the northern Aegean. The Persian commander Mardonios asserted control over Thrace and Macedonia in 492 in anticipation of reprisals against the two mainland states that had supplied ships and troops for the revolt in Asia Minor. Macedonia served as a useful staging ground, as described by Herodotos in his account of the later, massive campaign planned and led by Xerxes, the son and successor of Dareios. Grain stores were established in both Thrace and Macedonia, the massive army of approximately 250,000 camped along the Axios River near Sindos, and the fleet seems to have harbored at Pydna. If not officially a Persian vassal, the Macedonian king had little choice in the question of use of his kingdom by the Persians at the time of the land and sea expedition to Greece in 480–479. On the part of the Greeks, the Macedonians may well have been viewed as willing collaborators of the feared Persians.

Even so, Herodotos' portrayal of Alexander I as a well-wisher of the Greeks (VIII. 140–3) may have concrete support in the provision of timber to the Athenians two or three years earlier, to create the fleet of 200 ships that proved to be essential to the Greek stand against the Persian enemy. Inscriptions dating to the reigns of Perdikkas II and Archelaos record later agreements concerning Athenian access to Macedonian timber. As we have seen, timber – described as the best quality in the region of the Aegean and the Black Sea – was among Macedon's most coveted resources. Access to this source of timber was vital to any state intent on maintaining a fleet. The Athenians' decision as Persia readied for an attack was the construction of a fleet to confront the naval portion of the Persian force. Access to Macedonian timber was a requisite for the endeavor.

With the withdrawal of the Persians from Greece and Macedonia and the confused conditions in southern Greece that the invasion had



Figure 4.1 Coin of Alexander I, showing him riding a pacing horse, wearing a short *chiton* (tunic) with a *petasos* (traveling hat) on his head and carrying two spears in his left hand. His hunting dog is prancing under the horse. Now in the Numismatic Museum in Athens. Courtesy of Dr I. Touratstoglou

brought, King Alexander I of Macedon was able to extend the borders of his realm considerably, as noted in chapter 2. He is credited, too, with strengthening the Macedonian military, an essential tool in the expansion. In pushing eastward against the Thracians, Alexander gained valuable mineral wealth, some of which was now employed for Macedonian coinage. The carefully produced coins, some of them of great size, are good indications of the status that the Argeads were achieving not only in the smaller sphere of the northern Aegean but vis-à-vis other significant states and kingdoms further away.

A Macedonian ruler was, however, but one major figure, and within the next two generations a new player in the eastern Mediterranean gained an ascendancy that would bring Macedon and Greece into a changed, often aggressive relationship. Although the Persians had withdrawn from the western and northern Aegean lands, the Greek states of the eastern Aegean remained under Persian

control in 479. To restore the freedom of all of Greece, representatives of 143 states gathered on the Cycladic island Delos in 477 to create a league for this purpose. All members would participate in decisions at an annual assembly, each state exercising a vote. States would contribute to the enterprise by providing ships and men or, in lieu of manpower and naval support, funds. Athens provided a large part of the fleet that it had created to meet the Persian threat and served as leader, or *hegemon*, of operations decided by the full membership. The Athenians also set the required contributions and appointed financial officers to oversee the treasury established in the safety of Apollo's sanctuary on Delos.

Larger associations of independent Greek states had existed previously. Essentially, they were of two broad types: associations for common religious intents, on the one hand, and for common military interests, on the other. The common concern for the well-being of the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi produced the Delphic Amphiktyony of 12 poleis. The second form of association, a *symmachy* (literally a "fighting together"), joined independent states that agreed to have the same friends and same enemies; representatives from the members would assemble at a fixed location – generally that of the most powerful member – to vote on the need for action. The Peloponnesian League, with Sparta as its central power, grew to include most of the states of the Peloponnese and, in the fifth century, even beyond into central Greece. Such expansion is indicative of an increasing swell of larger associations with greater ambitions. It was these ambitions that proved a far more formidable threat to the Macedonian kingdom than the individual early Greek colonies had posed. Athens' role in molding and then altering the nature of the Delian League was chief among the concerns of the Argeads.

Surprising success greeted the efforts of the League, and by the early 460s the allied fleet won a major naval battle at Eurymedon off the southern coast of Anatolia, defeating the Persian/Phoenician fleet of 200 ships. Persian control in Thrace, the Hellespont, and the Aegean was at an end. The League was not dissolved, however, even

though several states attempted to withdraw once the objective had been accomplished. For Athens, on the other hand, the association was valuable in several other ways: policing the seas against pirates, rebuilding sanctuaries destroyed by the Persians, maintaining a confederation in the event of future hostilities with Persia, and establishing a maritime trade empire reaching throughout the Aegean into the Hellespont. From the 460s, and especially under the leadership of the Athenian statesman and general Perikles, the Delian League became an Athenian Empire centered on, and directed from, Athens. The power and brilliance of Athenian life at this time is defined as its Golden Age.

Membership, which was no longer voluntary but often accomplished and maintained by force, rose to some 300 states. Athenian interests in the northern Aegean, which had already been established in the sixth century, increased as access to the Propontis and the Black Sea became vital to secure the grain supplies to feed the state's now huge urban population. To reach these distant waters demanded a large fleet of sound ships and, thus, ongoing access to the timber resources of Macedonia. Consequently a strong presence in the northern Aegean was a priority of Athens, and it was accomplished by drawing some established states into the imperial network as well as by establishing new colonies, such as Amphipolis in the lower valley of the Strymon River, near the site of the "Nine Ways" that had been brought under Macedonian control by Alexander I. Both Amphipolis and the "Nine Ways" were ideally located to take advantage of trade down the Strymon and along the coast between northern Greece and the Hellespont. During the reign of Alexander I there seems to have been a modus vivendi between Athens and the king of Macedon. However, a contest for survival was likely and Alexander's successor, Perdikkas, fared less well. Athenian reluctance to recruit new members of the League in territory west of the Axios was replaced by active expansion in Macedonian territory after 431.

Yet another tactic was employed against Perdikkas: the Athenians supported the claim of Philip, a brother of Perdikkas, as rightful heir

to the throne. In 432, a coalition between Athens, the brother of Perdikkas, and Derdas king of Elimeia seized the site of Therme in the northwest of the Chalkidike from Perdikkas. Internal dissention along with a threat close to Pella would, hopefully, keep Perdikkas' vision trained on his own kingdom rather than on the activities of the Athenians on the fringes of that kingdom.

Perdikkas had a recourse: well aware of the divisions between the Greek states, he encouraged known enemies of Athenian activities in the northern Aegean to take action on their own behalf or on behalf of former colonies. The Corinthians responded to the Athenian threat to their colony of Potidaia with volunteers from Corinth and mercenaries from other parts of the Peloponnese numbering 1,600 heavy infantry and 400 light troops, according to Thukydides (I.60). Perdikkas added 200 cavalry, and men from other states in the region also joined. The defeat of these troops played no small part in events in Macedon for the duration of the fifth century. In Thukydides' narrative of the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War (431–404), the wrath of the Corinthians over incidents including the siege of Potidaia by the Athenians was a burning match that fired the declaration of war and, though not a formal participant, Macedon was torn by the conflict.

Perdikkas was not deposed by his brother and his Athenian accomplices; he lived on to rule until 413. It could not have been a comfortable reign inasmuch as his kingdom was all too often beset by the warring states. Macedon would be allied first with one side and then with another. Early in the Peloponnesian War, Macedon was an ally of Athens, but when Athens added Methone – which was within Macedonian territory – to its empire, Perdikkas sought the aid of the Spartans. He offered support and organized safe passage for a Spartan force to advance into the territory of his kingdom. Once the Spartans were there, Perdikkas supplied a Macedonian contingent, and jointly the forces marched to compel the Lynkestian leader to bring his region of upper Macedonia back into alliance with Perdikkas. Little was accomplished before the Spartan leader determined to campaign in the Chalkidike and Thrace, both

regions with strong Athenian connections, to which the theatre of war had now shifted. Great success greeted the Spartan activities in the northern Aegean. When the Spartans returned to Macedon, a second attempt to bring the Lynkestians to heel was made. The joint army was routed by the Illyrians, who had become allies of the Lynkestians. Not surprisingly, the alliance collapsed and by 423 Perdikkas was again allied to Athens, furnishing military support for an Athenian general in 422. In fact, Nicholas Hammond has proposed that "Macedon was [now] to all intents and purposes a member of the Athenian *arche* [rule]" (Hammond and Griffith 1979: 133). From c. 424 to 416 Perdikkas did not issue coins, a characteristic of once-independent states brought under Athenian control.

A peace accord between the Athenians and Spartans in 421 brought some respite from campaigning even though it did not resolve the issues causing the declaration of war. As those issues intensified again, Greek parties in the war again turned their sights northward, Athens adding more states to its control and the Peloponnesians attempting to draw more allies to their cause. Perdikkas was persuaded to join the Peloponnesians. Blockading the Macedonian coast to impair trade was one of the Athenian answers to the betrayal by the Macedonian king. Another answer was to look elsewhere for important resources, as well as to divert Peloponnesian attention from the Aegean. A large-scale naval expedition to Sicily set out in 415, an enterprise that renewed the bond between Macedon and Athens: when the Persians began to aid Sparta with the creation of naval power, Macedonian timber was again supplied to Athens. Moreover, in 414 Perdikkas was serving with an Athenian commander in an attack on Amphipolis. By the following year, he was dead; his son Archelaos inherited the daunting tasks of maintaining the independence of a unified kingdom and dealing with the ongoing war among the Greek states.

The Fates decreed that Macedon would avoid massive involvement during the remainder of that war. Recalling the confusion during his father's reign may have been Archelaos' inspiration to fortify the kingdom's borders and to link parts of the kingdom with

one another through a road system. Externally, his connection to Greece was almost exclusively with Athens. As mentioned previously, in 410, the coastal town of Pydna was taken by a combined Macedonian and Athenian siege, then the settlement was moved inland and refounded as a Macedonian town. Three years later Archelaos and his children were accorded the status of guest-friends, that is, *proxenoi*, of Athens, an honorary status but one conferring something like an ambassadorial position. Archelaos' cultural interests too reflected Athenian influence. Under his guidance, Pella became an impressive capital to which important guests were invited. Yet another notable development was the establishment of an Olympian festival in Macedon.

Such encouragement of Greek culture and aid to individual Greeks was not new. As early as the mid-sixth century, the Athenian tyrant Peisistratos settled in the northwestern region of Chalkidike during one of his forced exiles from Athens; while there he gained the friendship of Macedonia. His son and successor, Hippias, was offered shelter in Macedonia when he was exiled from Athens (Herodotos V.96). Accounts of Alexander I in the *Histories* of Herodotos describe a similar attraction to Greece. The historian reports that Alexander wished to compete in the Olympic games and was allowed to enter for the foot-race. "He came in equal first," Herodotos concludes his brief notice (V.22). While many modern scholars contest the accuracy of the report, it is indisputable that Philip II sent Macedonian teams to Olympia during his reign. Like Philip, the first Alexander may have been clever in demonstrating his hellenic sympathy and purported affinity, especially in the aftermath of the horrors of the Persian advance into his own kingdom as well as into the lands of the Greek states. As we shall see, philhellenism was a useful tool for both Philip II and Alexander III.

Upon Archelaos' assassination in 399, Macedonian weakness, combined with the fast-paced struggle for hegemony among the Greek states, undermined the staying power of Perdikkas and the stabilizing efforts of Archelaos. After the defeat of Athens in 404

and the dismantling of the Athenian Empire, a cycle of attempts on the part of the major states to recreate a Greek empire produced intense turmoil, accompanied by destruction of life and property, which would eventually undercut the basis of Classical Greek life, a condition that aided the efforts of Philip II. However, in the first four decades of the fourth century, the struggle nearly ended the independent existence of Macedon.

Sparta, Thebes, Thessaly, and Athens – after regaining its independence and strength – were the main contenders for imperial domination. Sparta took an early lead as head of the victorious Peloponnesian League in its efforts to end Athenian domination. Spartan policy was essentially directed toward turning former Athenian allies/subjects into Spartan allies/subjects. Additionally, Sparta showed little appreciation to its own allies during the Peloponnesian War. Amyntas III, the eventual successor of Archelaos, was drawn into the Spartan sphere through the problematic coastal towns on the Thermaic Gulf: as independent confederation efforts took root in the northern Aegean, towns and small states in that region had been pulled into an expanding Chalkidian Confederacy centered in Olynthos. Amyntas' demand that the towns in lower Macedonia be returned to his sovereignty was denied, and thus he turned to Sparta for aid. War on the Confederacy was successful, at least temporarily, in collapsing its bonds and in restoring lower Macedonia to Amyntas.

Closer to home than Sparta was Thessaly, where one Jason of the state of Pherai had established himself as overlord, or *tagos*, of Thessaly as well as of Epiros. That office appears to have been employed when the military force of all four districts was required; the *tagos* was commander of the unified force for the requisite duration. As warfare became a year-round necessity, the Thessalian *tagos* assumed a higher, permanent status. Jason's huge army of 20,000 hoplites, 8,000 cavalry, 6,000 mercenaries, and auxiliary peltasts may have impressed Amyntas sufficiently to create an alliance. On Jason's murder in 370, however, the balance of power reversed itself. Amyntas' successor, Alexander II, intervened in Thessaly, taking two

major centers. Seemingly uncertain of Macedonian power on the appearance of the Theban army at one of those centers, Alexander then withdrew. He was confronted with dynastic problems at home serious enough to bring about his murder in 367, which, in turn, unleashed new complicated alliances: as noted in chapter 3, his mother joined forces with Ptolemaios, a prominent Macedonian and perhaps a son of Amyntas II. The bond may have been love or aspiration for personal power or part of a foreign scheme. We only know that the pair turned to Athens for support.

Both Athens and Thebes had their own impressive confederacies. At the conclusion of the Peloponnesian War, Thebes had been ill-treated by its ally Sparta. The imposition of a Spartan garrison in 382 bred sufficient anger and determination to free the city in 379–378. Freedom, in turn, produced a drive for greater power that was marked by victory over the Spartans in 371. That success propelled Thebes to even greater ambitions, one of which involved Macedon. The brilliant Theban general Pelopidas gained an alliance with Macedon, and to ensure that the treaty would be honored he brought hostages for good behavior from the Macedonian royal family: notable among them was Philip, the brother of the ruling king. Philip stayed as hostage in Thebes for some three years at the height of Theban power. A crucial element of Theban power was a reform of Greek hoplite warfare.

And, of course, Athens was a player in the same contest for empire. Founding a second maritime confederacy with greater control over the coercive powers of Athens, the state drew together former members of the Delian League and new members as well, notably Thebes. Its purpose was to eliminate Spartan control of other poleis, allowing them to regain their freedom and autonomy. The Athenians would have appreciated the value of the alliance with Amyntas III concluded in the mid-370s, for it provided access to the vital source of timber. That alliance was renewed in the mid-360s when Macedonian kingship had passed to Amyntas's second son, Perdikkas III, even though friendship between Athens and Macedon had eroded within a few years.

Perdikkas, then, had to be ready to deal with the powerful leagues of the Chalkidike, Thessaly, Thebes, and Athens either with sufficient armed force or by clever diplomacy. Nor could he ignore the constant threats from northern, western, and eastern neighbors. He did not live long enough to confront all of Macedon's enemies: an invasion by the Illyrians in 360 or 359 left him dead on the field of battle along with 4,000 of his troops.

Philip's Relations with the Greeks

With the death of his brother Perdikkas, Philip was a strong candidate for the Argead kingship. If acclaimed by the army assembly and clever enough to elude rivals for power, his inheritance would include the complex set of relationships with the Greek world whose development we have traced from the early fifth to the mid-fourth century.

We know that Philip was extraordinarily successful, not only in securing and holding the kingship of Macedon but in expanding its boundaries from the Adriatic into the Black Sea. The Greek world became subject to the hegemony of Philip and, before his death, was officially joined with Macedon in his war against the Persians. The accomplishment of these feats demonstrates a solid understanding of the ways of his neighbors to the south and an ability to employ Greek tools, conditions, and ambitions to Macedon's advantage.

In dealing with these neighbors, it is not surprising that Philip's earliest attention focused on territories adjacent to Macedonia – Thessaly and the Chalkidike peninsula – and that he proceeded in ways that were familiar to the Greek states, that is, militarily and through alliance. After taking Potidaia in 356, for instance, he turned it over to the Chalkidian League, with which he was currently allied. But, as we have seen, other Greek states had a strong interest in these regions, the states of central Greece casting their eyes on Thessaly and the Athenians looking to the Chalkidike and other

parts of the northern Aegean. Although nominally allied by treaty with Athens, Philip reclaimed Methone from Athenian control in 354. Upon gaining at least a foothold in regions beyond current Macedonian borders, he employed another tool of the Greek states in his founding of new settlements or refounding of established towns as Macedonian centers. In Thessaly, the town controlling the strategic southern access to the pass at Tempe became a Macedonian settlement, while Krenides, valuable for its mineral wealth as well as its location just east of the Chalkidike, was refounded as Philippoi. In regions where he knew the value of the constitutional structure for his purposes, he inserted himself into it: in Thessaly he took the position of *tagos*, or supreme military commander.

First-hand acquaintance with the situation in Greece was valuable in shaping a Macedonian response to that situation. One of Philip's first priorities was the expansion and reorganization of the army. While his forces had to be employed against a variety of peoples and their differing tactics, he had witnessed the success of the Theban reforms while detained for three years in Thebes. And



Figure 4.2 Northern Thessaly. Photograph by Richard R. Johnson

in his youth while his father Amyntas was king, he is more than likely to have seen Greek hoplites and their generals in action near or even within the territory of the Macedonian kingdom. To be sure, Philip's military reforms went beyond the Theban developments, yet they built on the basis that had enabled Thebes to defeat the once formidable Spartan army, and to build an extensive league with alliances throughout much of the southern Greek world.

There can be little question that Philip appreciated the spirit of treaty-making in Greece. Just as Athens could ally with the Messenians in 355 although it had been since 369 allied to the Messenians' long-standing, bitter enemy Sparta, so Philip's own ties could fluctuate as convenience dictated. On the other hand, he appreciated the value of multi-state agreements and employed them in his growing command over the Greek states. During the fourth century, confederations were built through bilateral treaties; when the network of treaties drew together a sizeable number of states, mechanisms emerged for federal decision-making and implementation, such as a council of representatives from the allied states. The state responsible for the confederation was recognized as its leader, or *hegemon*, for coordinating the common defense and necessary offense of all the members. Macedon became more and more active in this world of alliances. For many decades, as we have noted, Macedonian kings made bilateral agreements that were of the same fluid nature as those negotiated between Greek states. Perdikkas was adept at such maneuvering during the period of the Peloponnesian War. Macedonian kings also dealt with confederacies, especially the nearby Chalkidian League and the Athenian imperial association that had begun as the Delian League. In his first year as king, Philip and Athens agreed to the terms of a treaty; in the following year, the alliance between Macedon and the Thessalian state of Larisa was reaffirmed; three years later found Philip allied with the Chalkidian League; in 346 he sent two of his senior officers – Antipatros and Parmenion – to Athens to present terms for a bilateral peace agreement. A vote of the Athenian assembly affirmed this agreement as the Peace of Philokrates.

Alongside such confederacies were leagues organized for the well-being of major religious sanctuaries, known as amphiktyonies or associations of those states situated around (*amphi*) the land of the sanctuary. In mainland Greece, the Delphic Amphiktyony had its origins in the Archaic Period. Its membership by the fourth century extended to states that were in no sense physical neighbors of Apollo's sanctuary, such as Sparta and Athens. Although aggressive action was not the main function of an amphiktyony, protection of the sacred property might demand it. In addition to such earlier associations, a new development in the 380s introduced another form of association that strove for the autonomy of individual states, rather than federation, in pursuit of a common peace. Its origins were not in Greece but in Persia, now once again an active player in Greek affairs. In order to end the ongoing warfare that regularly spilled into Asia Minor, King Artaxerxes II decreed the terms of the King's Peace in 387.

> King Artaxerxes thinks it just that the cities in Asia, and the islands of Clazomenai and Cyprus, shall belong to him. Further that all the other Greek cities, small and great, shall be autonomous. If any refuse to accept this peace I shall make war on them, along with those who are of the same purpose, both by land and sea, with both ships and money.

Congresses were called periodically (375, 371, 366, and 362) to discuss and reaffirm the terms of the Peace.

Philip would be drawn into the affairs of the Delphic Amphiktyony as war surged around Apollo's land from the mid-350s into the mid-340s. Known as the Sacred War, it resulted from the action of one of the members, Phokis, when the Council of the Amphiktyony levied a fine against Phokis for cultivating part of the sacred land. Rather than paying the fine, the Phokians resisted, raised an army that included mercenaries, and took much of the store of wealth housed at Delphi. With the wealth and a strong force, the Phokians carried their anger into the territory of other amphiktyonic states for the next nine years. To put an end to Phokian power,

the Amphiktyony invited an outside power to bring his force into central Greece to accomplish that aim. Philip and his army were successful in defeating the Phokians in 346; their base of power was broken and their membership in the Delphic Amphiktyony went to Philip. Thanks to this position, Philip presided over the Pythian games at Delphi in the same year.

The rising predominance of Macedon in the Greek sphere brought support from many who saw in Philip a solution to the endless conflict between Greek states and leagues of states. Isokrates, an Athenian who lived for 98 years (from 436 to 338), is one of the best examples. War was the abiding condition of those years and its consequences directed Isokrates' efforts toward a search for peace. He wrote tracts to a number of powerful leaders urging them to reconcile the Greek states and then direct aggression outward, against the Persians. In the *Philippos* he urged Philip to attempt to reconcile the major states of Argos, Sparta, Thebes, and Athens, since by uniting these major powers it would be made far less difficult to add minor states. Then, Isokrates continued, Philip should extend his activity into Asia against the barbarian Persians, gaining welcome land for the Greeks and eliminating a serious enemy. Philip had other friends: a list of "traitors" provided by the Athenian statesman Demosthenes, who steadfastly remained Philip's detractor, lists individuals from Thessaly, Arkadia, Argos, Elis, Messene, Sikion, Corinth, Megara, Thebes, Euboia, and Athens (Demosthenes, *On the Crown* XVIII.295). These and other "traitors" were drawn to Philip through his obvious successes but also because of his personal traits. The Athenian orator and statesmen Aischines reported that his fellow citizen Demosthenes had described Philip as *deinotatos* when the group of Athenian envoys, of which they were both members, was returning from a conference with the Macedonian king (*On the Embassy* II.41). As outlined earlier, the Greek word *deinos* has several meanings: the positive sense of wondrous, marvelous, strong; the equally favorable meaning of clever or skillful; but often the sense of fearful, terrible, dangerous. In the presence of such a person, one might feel all of these qualities in the same rush of experience.

There were warnings against trusting Philip and his Macedonians. Demosthenes spoke out plainly to the Athenians in his *First Philippic*, declaring that their apathy was removing their potential to prevent Philip from drawing even more Greeks into his net. While the Athenians idly watched, Philip was toiling without stop. In his *Third Philippic* he repeated his warning that Athenians were only watching as the man grew greater.

Eventually such warnings were heeded by people in other states: Philip's Greek "allies" were uncertain about the value of his involvement in Greek affairs, and by the late 340s, his Athenian "allies" persuaded his Theban "allies" in the Amphiktyony to join forces against Philip and his Macedonians. Other Greeks also joined this new confederation: Euboians, Achaians, Corinthians, Megarians, and Epidaurians from the Peloponnese and central Greece. and, from the west, Leukadians, Korkyreans, Akarnanians, and Ambrakiots. Philip had Thessaly in his camp. When yet another war divided the members of the Delphic Amphiktyony, Philip was appointed leader of the joint forces against the violator. The presence of the Macedonian army in central Greece was sufficient cause for the states hostile to Philip to prepare for battle. As we have seen, roughly equal numbers – 30,000–35,000 on each side – drew up opposite one another at Chaironeia in the summer of 338. Philip led the right flank opposite the Athenian hoplites while Alexander, on the left flank, was positioned to deal with the Theban infantry. The Macedonians were entirely successful.

Philip turned to new treaty-making, first on the basis of bilateral settlements with the individual Greek states. It may well be that he had the assistance of Aristotle and students in Aristotle's school in drawing up the formal boundaries of states as one step in reducing warfare. Then an attempt to create a common peace throughout Greece reveals Philip's appreciation of this recent form of alliance. Calling a congress of representatives from all of Greece at Corinth in 337, he presented terms for an alliance between the Greek states and Macedon that would be both offensive and defensive. Philip would have command of troops furnished by all the members in

case of war, but he would not be a member of the council of the allies that was responsible for making decisions and acting as the supreme judicial. Apart from affairs of the League, all states would be independent. Any member state that violated the terms of the alliance would be punished, as would any individual who disrupted the workings of his own state or who became a mercenary for the Persian king. The formalization of these conditions established the League of Corinth. Its existence was valuable in many ways, one of them as facilitating Philip's incipient plans for a campaign against Persia. If we can safely assume that he read Isokrates' address to him, his campaign might now be described as one on behalf of the Greeks.

In sum, the long association between Macedon and Greece enabled Philip to speak the Greek language in more than words. He understood the intricacies of treaties and alliances, and appreciated the importance of institutions, such as the Olympic games, or practices, for instance the religious regard for the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi. He knew well the strife within and between Greek states and was able to exploit it. Familiarity with the different conditions of towns under his own control and with cities – even in his own territory – claiming their independence would have influenced his preference for the former. Just as Perdikkas had refounded the Greek polis of Pydna as a Macedonian-controlled town, so did Philip reorder Krenides to become Philippoi – *his* city. Leagues, especially Greek associations, were troublesome to the Macedonians, as Philip's predecessors knew very well. However, they were essential, first, in creating the later Macedonian kingdom and, second, in putting an end to the incessant warfare between the larger coalitions of Greek states. Philip obviously valued the Greek hoplite army and built upon it to craft his own force. As efforts in Thrace proved successful, he realized at first hand that Persia was a problem to regions in the northern and western Aegean. His father had supported the Thebans in their aid to the western satraps against the then Persian king, and Philip seems to have had dealings with one Hermias, who had created a small kingdom in the Troad (the northwestern region

of Anatolia around the site of Troy), as well as with one Pixodaros, ruler of part of Karia in southern Anatolia. Such contacts had cultural as well as military significance for Macedon.

Cultural Influences

Greek and Macedonians had been neighbors for at least three and a half centuries prior to the reign of Philip II. The relationship, as we have explored it, was regularly a hostile jockeying for control of territory and access to resources. But accompanying that struggle was knowledge of one another's cultures, which in the earlier stages of interaction were markedly different in many – although not all – respects. Over time, the similarities increased, notably in religion, language, architecture, the arts, and cultural institutions. Inasmuch as Greek culture was the more sophisticated of the two, by the Archaic Age (c. 750–500) its influence on Macedonia was the predominant direction of borrowing.

We have noted that the major divine and heroic figures of the Argead line were Zeus and Herakles. The explanation of this bond is lost in the mist of Argead origins, and it is not necessary to accept the tale of the departure of three brothers from Argos to acknowledge the Argeads' own understanding of their ancestral links. What *is* significant is the similarity the understanding creates with Greek thought. Moreover, in due course, other hellenic deities were incorporated into Macedonian festivals. Late fourth-century temples consecrated to Demeter replaced two sixth-century megara (architectural units consisting of a columned porch and a main room with a hearth and often a third room at the front or back) associated with that goddess. Paintings from the Aigai/Vergina tombs reveal the presence of Demeter's daughter Persephone in the Macedonian repertoire, while an altar of Dionysos has been identified in the remains of the theater at the same site. Certainly Dionysos is a favorite subject in mosaics from the late fourth century and beyond. Pan figured on coins of Amyntas II, and Apollo appears on coins of

Philip II. The occasion on which Philip was murdered was inaugurated by a parade of images of the pantheon of the Greek gods, with an image of Philip included as the thirteenth figure.

That celebration was held in the theater at the old capital of Aigai, constructed during the reign of Archelaos for the purpose of festivals to Zeus and the Muses, contests, and performances of plays. Smaller than Greek theaters, it was nonetheless modeled on Greek examples. Moreover, Greek dramatists had been invited to Macedonia, one of them Euripides, who created the *Bakkhai*, which is extant, and the *Archelaos*, which is not. That Athenian poet died in Macedonia. Another Athenian dramatist, Agathon, was the guest of the same Argead ruler, as were the choral poet Timotheos of Miletos and the epic poet Khoirilos of Samos.

Yet another celebration common throughout the Greek world was the Olympic-style contests that Archelaos established at Dion. The dramatic element of competition reveals that Macedonians were receptive to hellenic culture, and common appreciation of athletic prowess is demonstrated in the values of both societies. We have discussed the Macedonian emphasis on physical training in chapters 2 and 3, particularly for members of the royal line, who were expected to lead the Macedonian army by example. The account of Alexander I's participation in the Greek Olympic games, whether true or not, demonstrates his personal fitness by the outcome: he tied for first place in the foot-race.

It is possible, of course, to understand these borrowings as propaganda – "we Macedonians are truly akin to you Greeks" – or as efforts to civilize a rude, even barbaric population. An argument against such conclusions is that the borrowings took root and grew stronger as well as more numerous. Just as a biological body rejects a transplanted organ that is alien to its constitution, so too will a cultural body reject uncongenial foreign customs.

Use of the Greek alphabet became the norm for the written language of the kingdom. Because of the paucity of evidence regarding the spoken language of the Macedonians, the question of its relation to Greek cannot be determined. On the other hand, there

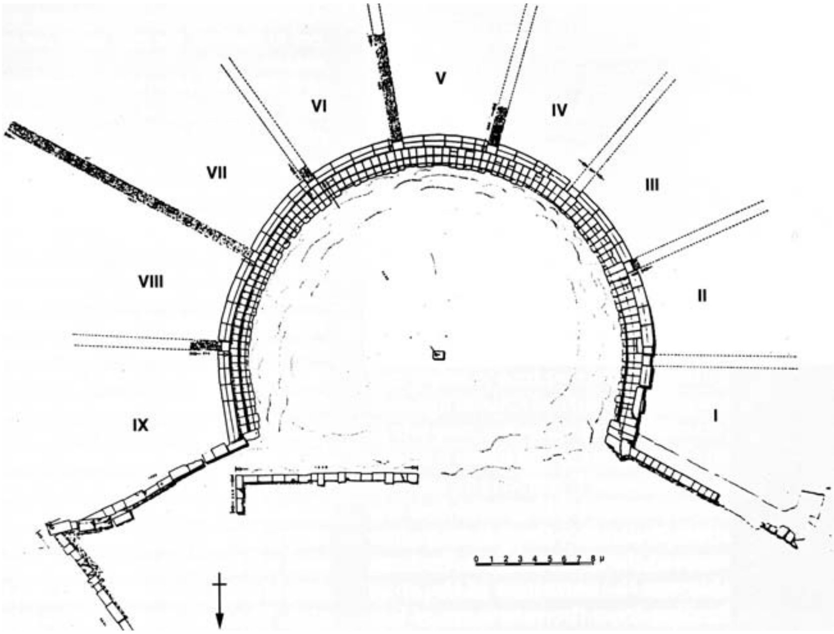


Figure 4.3 Plan of the theater at Vergina where Philip was assassinated in 336 BCE. The numbers I-IX denote the nine segments of the theatre auditorium, with V being the central segment. The rectangle in the center of the orchestra is a stone on which the altar once stood. Courtesy of the Archaeological Receipts Fund Greek Ministry of Culture, Athens

is more evidence for the written language. Inscriptions recording agreements between Macedonians and Greeks, particularly the Athenians, have survived, although they derive from Greek states that were parties to the agreements. Versions in Macedonian may have been composed in quite a different form. That this was not the case is suggested by surviving inscriptions of other sorts: 47 grave stelai from Aigai/Vergina dated to the second half of the fourth century record names of the deceased, the majority of which are Greek. As reasoned by the excavator, a date of death at c. 330 suggests a birth date for many of the people during the decade of c. 370–360. Inclusion of a patronymic on most of the stelai suggests a dating of c. 410–400 for the second names recorded. The

individuals remembered are not only or even primarily Macedonian nobility; in other words they were more ordinary Macedonians. To be sure, Aigai/Vergina was the original capital of the kingdom. Consequently, the use of alternative Greek names may have been a practice only in this particular location. Yet this conclusion is belied by inscriptions from Beroia in the region of Bermion, where inscriptions that include names were also written in the Greek alphabet. It must be admitted that the Illyrians or others of the neighboring peoples to the north, west, or east would not have provided an alternative script; Greek was the only choice. However, the point, as in the case of hellenic deities, is that the Greek alphabet was found to be satisfactory, and its use became the norm for Macedonian inscriptions both official and personal.

Also respected was Greek knowledge. Pella was organized on the rectangular network of streets associated with the Greek Hippodamos; theaters, though less impressive than Greek examples, employed the features similar to Greek structures; the Greek painter Zeuxis was a guest of King Archelaos and the forms of the surviving paintings at Aigai suggest the features attributed to that artist, whose Greek works have not survived: shadow, experimentation with color and with perspective, an effort to capture emotion. Knowledge of other kinds was represented by Greeks drawn to the rulers' service: Eumenes of Kardia as director of the Macedonian records; Nearchos of Crete with his knowledge of the sea. They were employed – used, certainly – but their skills were essential to the efforts of their employers. Thus skills as well as people were caught up in the shaping of Macedonian life. One remarkable example will reveal the degree of interaction achieved over the reigns of Amyntas III and his third son, Philip II.

A Special Relationship

Archelaos' successors continued his practice of inviting well-known and useful Greek visitors to Pella. Amyntas III established a link that would last through much of his reign and into those of Philip II

and Alexander III when he brought Nikomachos and his wife Phaestris of Stageira to his capital. Stageira, located in the northeast Chalkidike, was originally colonized in the Archaic Age by people from the island of Andros off the southern coast of Attica. Over time, Greeks from other regions joined the original settlers. Its location drew it into larger alliances that we have discussed above – the Delian League, the Peloponnesian League, and the Chalkidian League – and with Macedonian expansion eastward, it would be a target for the Argead kings.

Nikomachos is described as both the physician and friend of the king; thus his practice of medicine seems to account for his move to Macedonia with Phaestris and their young son, Aristotle (b.384). Accounts indicate that both parents died while Aristotle was young; he then became the ward of a relative named Proxenos. It is unclear whether Aristotle remained in Pella or returned to Stageira on the death of his parents. In his eighteenth year, he moved to Athens to become a member of Plato's Academy, and he remained in Athens for 20 years. Aristotle's subsequent writings reveal the influence of Platonic thought. Another influence came from the rhetorician Isokrates, whom we have seen petitioning Philip to assist in effecting peace in Greece.

A decision to leave Athens in 348/7 can be explained by two events: the death of Plato, followed by the recognition of his nephew Speusippos as his successor, and rising anti-Macedonian emotions after Philip's capture of Olynthos, a major Athenian ally in the Chalkidike. Aristotle's earlier ties with Pella may well have made withdrawal from Athens a sensible action. He spent the next three years in northwestern Asia Minor, where Hermias, a former fellow student, had carved out a small kingdom in the Troad during the struggles between the western satraps and the Great King of Persia. Other students of Plato lived in Atarneos at the same time, forming a small circle of intellectuals, a situation that would increasingly be the practice of rulers after the death of Alexander III. The relations of the philosophers with Hermias seem to have been close; the ruler was attracted to Platonic views, and the students of Plato can be



Figure 4.4 Modern statue of Aristotle in his home-town of Stageira. Photograph by Mr T. Voreinos

seen as following in the steps of their master, who advised the ruler of Syracuse. And in the case of Aristotle, there was a personal closeness demonstrated by Aristotle's marriage to Pythias, the niece and adopted daughter of Hermias.

It has been argued, in particular by Anton-Hermann Chroust, that Aristotle's connection with Hermias was linked to Aristotle's role as an agent and informant of Philip. Hermias' small kingdom was strategically placed for a Macedonian incursion into the north-western realm of the Persian Empire. In fact, one of the residents at Pella from 353 or 352 was Artabazos, a satrap of Anatolian Phrygia, whose revolt against the Great King had been defeated. With his family, Artabazos remained in Macedonia for some ten years.

Three years later, however, Aristotle moved to Mytilene on the island of Lesbos, perhaps within Hermias' sphere of influence. Aristotle's biological studies are associated with this period of his life. After two years, he was to move again, back to Pella; he was summoned, accounts tell us, by Philip to educate his son, Alexander. Plutarch records that Philip

> [s]ent for Aristotle, the most famous and learned of the philosophers of his time . . . Aristotle was a native of the city of Stageira, which Philip himself destroyed. He now repopulated it and brought back all the citizens who had been enslaved or driven into exile . . . He gave Aristotle and his pupils the temple of the Nymphs near Mieza as a place where they could study and converse . . . It was Aristotle, I believe, who did more than anyone to implant in Alexander his interest in the art of healing as well as that of philosophy . . . He regarded the *Iliad* as a handbook of the art of war and took with him on his campaigns a text annotated by Aristotle. (*Alexander* VII and VIII)

Not only the nature of this education but even the accuracy of describing Aristotle as Alexander's tutor is debated by scholars. Its validity may be strengthened by the list of Aristotle's writings, which included a book *On Colonies* and another *On Monarchy* purportedly written for Alexander, as well as by the records of Aristotle's letters: to Philip, to Alexander (four books), to Olympias (one book), to Hephaistion (one book), and to Antipatros (nine books), the last-named one of Philip's most influential aides who was named by Aristotle as the executor (*epitropos*) of his will. Aristotle was closely associated with the most important figures in Pella during the late 340s, and that association rested on some basis or perhaps multiple bases.

In his life of Aristotle, written probably in the third century CE, Diogenes Laertios quotes the philosopher's belief that a wise man would fall in love and take part in politics; moreover he would marry and live at a king's court (*Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers* XXXI). That a philosopher might teach others while living at a king's court is unsurprising in light of the activities of

other wise men. Mounting enthusiasm for and knowledge of Greek culture on the part of the Argead kings would surely indicate the value of instructing potential heirs to power in Greek subjects. Philip's invitation to Aristotle may have rested on personal acquaintance between the two men, first from the period of their youth when Aristotle lived at Pella with his parents, and more recently through their mutual contacts with Hermias of Atarneos.

Little is known of the nature of Aristotle's mode of education, whether in Macedonia or later in his own school. Diogenes Laertios provides a clue by listing the philosopher's definition of the qualities essential to proper education as natural endowment, study, and constant practice (*Lives and Opinions* XVIII). The later writer also states that Aristotle taught his pupils to speak on a set thesis together with practicing rhetorical ability. Judging by the quantity of Aristotle's own written works – Diogenes lists 400 items as genuine – it is safe to assume that students were trained in writing as well. Scientific research may well have been another component if the story is true that Alexander ordered Macedonian hunters, fowlers, and fishermen to provide information about the animals, birds, and fish that they had observed or caught. One other feature of Aristotle's method of education can be added on the basis of the nature of the school he established in Athens in the mid-330s: acquisition of knowledge was a collegial affair both in terms of its academic routine and with respect to its social aspects. Situated in a grove dedicated to Apollo Lyceios, the school also contained a gymnasium, a building with space for lectures and collections of books, maps and objects, and a place for common meals. The tradition that Aristotle instructed a number of youths at Mieza may well have been a precursor to the practices at the Lyceum in Athens.

By 340, when he acted as regent for his father, Alexander's life precluded devotion to education. Just where Aristotle lived between 340 and 335 is unclear; he may have returned to Stageira. By 335, he was back in Athens to found his own school, described above. It may not be coincidence that his return took place at the time of Athens' submission to Alexander. Thebes had just been taken and

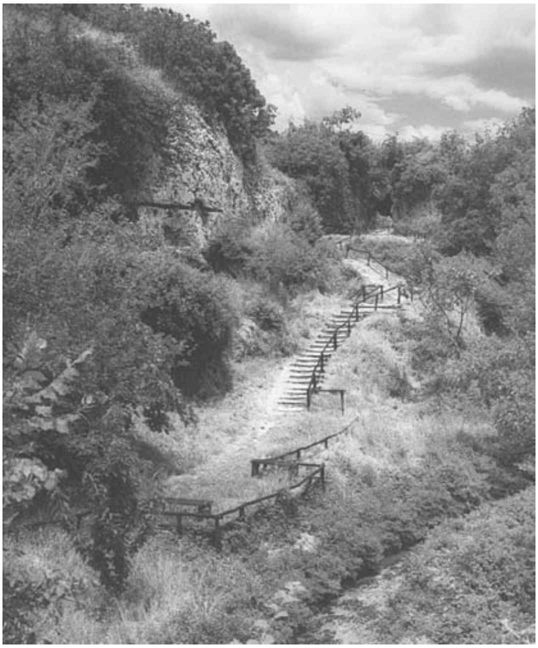


Figure 4.5 Site of the Nymphaion at Mieza. Courtesy of Dr E. Kafalidou, Archaeological Museum of Thessalonike

razed after revolting against Macedonian hegemony, and the Athenians feared similar retaliation. Instead, Athens was treated diplomatically through treaty rather than through military retaliation. Aristotle remained in Athens to 323, when he moved to Chalkis on the adjacent island of Euboia. Once again, his connection with Macedon may have provided the impetus. Alexander had died and Antipatros, to whom he had entrusted his affairs, had been recalled to Asia. A person with strong connections to these traditional enemies of Athens might well fear for his life. Later sources report that shortly before his death Aristotle wrote to Antipatros about the danger of living in Athens if one were an alien. This would be especially pronounced in the situation of Aristotle with Alexander dead

and Antipatros presumably en route to the east. It is no great surprise to learn that the Athenian assembly voted for war against Macedon on learning of Alexander's death. A new alliance with Aitolia, Sikion, Thessaly, northwest Boiotia, Messenia, Argos, and parts of the island of Euboia agreed to secure the freedom of the Greeks. After initial success, the return of 10,000 veterans with the Macedonian general Krateros defeated the coalition in 322. Surely Aristotle was wise to have departed Athens. He died of illness in Chalkis in 322.

In sum, the association of Aristotle with Macedonia reveals several characteristics of Macedonian culture – at least the culture of Argead Pella. The recruitment of notable Greeks to Macedonia from the reign of Alexander I through that of King Archelaos slowed but did not cease during the troubled reign of Amyntas III. Expertise especially appropriate to a realm constantly at war was found in the physician Nikomachos of Stageira, who moved to Pella with his wife and young son, Aristotle. The association was ended by the deaths of Nikomachos and Phaestris at a relatively young age – there is no indication of foul play. Although Aristotle did not continue to abide in Macedonia, he would return after his 20 years as a student in Plato's Academy in Athens. The education of Alexander III is the usual explanation for Aristotle's return in 343/2, and while his role as educator is questioned by a few modern scholars, his concern with education is illustrated by his founding of his own school in Athens in 335. Other responsibilities may well have been given to this philosopher. As we have noted, he lived at the center of the small kingdom of Atarneos in Anatolia from 348/7 to 345/4 and, for the next two years, on the island of Lesbos off the Anatolian coast. It is interesting to note Philip's own interest in Atarneos as the Macedonian king became increasingly active in the Propontis and the Black Sea, namely the northern boundaries of the Persian Empire. During this same period of time, a rebel Persian satrap from Anatolia resided with his family in the Macedonian capital.

On his return to Athens, Aristotle was in a position to assist Philip with the terms of settlement of Greek affairs following the

Macedonian victory at Chaironeia: as mentioned above, the boundaries of individual Greek states are said to have been determined by Aristotle and his students. His return may also point to abiding links with the ruling Argead king, Alexander III. On Philip's murder, traditional enemies of Macedon determined that the situation was propitious for revolt from Macedonian control. While Alexander was drawn to deal with northern enemies, several Greek states rebelled. On his return, Alexander dealt quickly with the rebels. Thebes was razed while Athens, in spite of its contributing to the Theban revolt, was generously treated, a consequence, perhaps, of Aristotle's intercession on its behalf.

The case for Aristotle's role as envoy, intermediary, and agent is not foolproof but gains support from the role of philosophers of the same and the next generations. Xenokrates, head of the Academy from 339 to 314, was a member of an Athenian embassy sent to negotiate with Philip. Later he was an envoy to Antipatros to urge the release of prisoners taken in the war that erupted on Alexander's death in 323. Kallisthenes, who was the nephew of Aristotle, Anaxagoras, and his pupil Pyrrho, known as the founder of the Skeptic School of philosophy, accompanied Alexander on his campaign. Theophrastos, Aristotle's successor as head of the Lyceum, was invited to Egypt by Ptolemy I. Stoics were part of the court of Antigonos Gonatas, king of Macedon in the early third century. Later in that century the Stoic Sphairos played a role in a program of the Spartan kings, while the Cynic philosopher Kerkidas acted as an ambassador to the then Macedonian king in an effort to halt the Spartan success. An Epicurean mathematician served three Seleukid kings in the second century, and in the middle of that century an embassy of three philosophers representing three different schools was sent to deal with the Roman senate.

Aristotle's role is important not merely in disclosing the political involvement of intellectuals but also in testifying to the intellectual acumen of the Argead kings. They understood Greek culture well and actively used it for both its inherent value and for their own purposes. The individual connections also provide clues to the true

nature of life in the land where, according to Demosthenes, one could not even buy a decent slave. Eumenes, the son of a guest-friend of Philip from the Greek town of Kardia on the Thracian Chersonese, was brought to Pella to serve as head of the secretariat for seven years. He continued in this capacity under Alexander, but in India was appointed to a command position, and, at the marriage ceremony of Alexander and his companions in Susa in 324, Eumenes was wed to a sister of Alexander's mistress, Barsine. Rising to this elevated status indicates the importance of record-keeping in Macedonia by the reign of Philip, if not before. Greeks may have had greater literacy skills but one Marsyas of Pella, a contemporary of Alexander III, wrote an account in 10 books of the history of Macedonia from the origins of the kingship to summer of 331 BCE. An Argead king was well advised to appreciate the skills of the Greeks – and others, of course – and incorporate skills and personnel into his kingdom. Greek states and leagues were bothersome pests, but the tools of the Greeks were essential to Macedonian vitality. In the fullness of time, those tools and customs became integral to Macedonian culture. Lines of distinction between Macedonian and Greek cultures were blurring long before the Hellenistic Age.

5
Surviving by Might

The descriptions of the region of Macedonia and the kingdom of Macedon in preceding chapters have disclosed vulnerability as well as latent potential in its location, resources, and elements of its culture. As a map reveals, it is situated between the Greek peninsula – part of the larger Mediterranean world – and the continent of Europe. Macedonians were but one of many groups of people endeavoring to create and maintain a secure state in part of this larger region. As we have seen, the task was not easy.

The physical features of Macedonia were of some aid, but they did not offer complete protection: mountains, perennial rivers, and the Thermaic Gulf of the Aegean were deterrents to would-be infiltrators, but passes through the mountains, riverbeds, and ships provided openings to the interior of the kingdom that were regularly discovered and utilized by others. What is more, the impressive resources of Macedonia could serve as strong incentives for others to use these routes for their own advantage. We have seen that hostile incursions were as frequent as peaceful trading exchanges, if not more so.

Barbarian Neighbors

Barbarian neighbors who surrounded the core of the early kingdom possessed a significant advantage over the Macedonians in their

numbers and in their explosive military power, which erupted regularly. Even the scanty evidence shows that there were far too many of these troublesome neighbors for the Macedonian way of thinking. In fact, many of them had once occupied territory in parts of what would eventually become the center of the Macedonian kingdom. Thracian tribes that had been established in the eastern Aegean since the Bronze Age began, in the Iron Age, to push westward beyond the Strymon River to the Axios River valley. Even closer to the center of Macedonia was one such group – the Pìeres – who may have occupied the region of Pieria between the Haliakmon and Peneios rivers. Paionians, too, had occupied lands along the lower Axios valley until the Thracian shift west pushed them further north into the Balkans. Philip began to deal with the Thracian threat in the first years of his reign, and 16 years later, Philip's forces were still campaigning in Thrace: 342 marked the final confrontation, in which the armies of two Thracian kings were defeated and removed from power, replaced by a deputy of Philip. However, even though nominally under Macedonian control, further campaigns in the region of eastern Thrace were required.

The peoples who entered and settled in Illyria between the tenth and the eighth centuries were a constant threat as they extended their reach in southerly and easterly directions. Amyntas III was driven from his kingdom by one of their invasions; his son Perdikkas III, along with 4,000 of his troops, was slain in battle with Illyrian invaders; one of the first responsibilities of his successor, Philip II, was to raise a levy of 10,000 infantry and 600 cavalry to face the forces of the Illyrian king Bardylis; and an immediate concern of Alexander on his succession drew his Macedonian army to confront the Illyrians and other northern peoples. Not only were their own raids fearful occurrences, but their movements pushed other groups in new directions.

It is incorrect, of course, to think of these peoples as coherent groups. Rather, there were many Thracian, Illyrian, and Paionian tribes under their own kings. Noted above is the Macedonian defeat of *two* Thracian armies commanded by *two* kings. Another danger

was that several enemies of Macedon might join forces: in 356, an alliance brought together Grabos and his Illyrians, Lyppeios and his Paionians, Ketriporis and his Thracians, and the polis of Athens (Tod ii 157 = IG II^2 127).

A Macedonian king must be prepared for the nature of threats from enemies such as "Kersobleptes, a king of the Thracians, [who] continued to subdue the cities along the Hellespont that bordered on Thrace and to ravage the territory" (Diodoros XVI.71.1). Thus an Argead king must be ready to act as Philip did in falling "upon Illyria with a great force. Having ravaged the land and taken many of towns, he returned to Macedonia with much booty" (XVI.69.7). But a Macedonian king had also to be prepared to engage the enemy in pitched battle, as Perdikkas did in trying to defeat the Illyrians in 359.

The Threat of Empire

Another type of vulnerability existed in the higher level of political and economic organization of certain of Macedon's neighbors. By 530, Kyros of Persia had conquered a massive territory extending from central Asia to the Mediterranean. During his reign from 522 to 486, King Dareios I had organized an administrative structure in which local regions were governed by officials appointed by, and responsible to, a central hierarchy headed by the Great King of the entire realm. In wealth, numbers of subjects, and coordination of economic and military activities, the accomplishment of Persia dwarfed earlier impressive states not only in the ancient Near East but also throughout the entire world.

The conquest had been rapid under Kyros the Great; in his reign of 29 years, Kyros extended the boundaries from the Indos River in the east, through modern Afghanistan, Iran, and Iraq to the Mediterranean coast, and to Anatolia in the north. His son and successor, Kambyses, added Egypt, and the third Great King of Persia, Dareios I, began to push across the Hellespont into Thrace. Attempts

at adding further territory here were foiled by the Skythians. However, Herodotos reports that Dareios sought to establish ties with the king of Macedon by sending envoys and, somewhat later, through a marriage alliance between a Persian commander and a royal Argead woman (V.17–20). Persian activity in the northern Aegean would be slowed by the outcome of the attack on Greece in 480–479, but it revived in the circumstances of the fourth century.

Armed confrontation with the Persians would have quite a different nature than conflicts with tribal neighbors. In the first place, the Persian army was a professional force, with members of the Persian elite trained to serve as generals and officers. The Persian Empire's size and its variety of peoples produced large numbers of troops; a reasonable estimate for the Persian forces led to Greece in 480 is 250,000. Even by the end of the fifth century, the entire population of Macedon within the region effectively possessed was only 228,000. The military talents contributed by individual Persian contingents were diverse: the Persians themselves were expert horsemen; others were well-trained archers; some units fought with battle-axes while other carried spears, javelins, and daggers. In addition to his army, the Persian king had a large and effective fleet. To use numbers from the Persian Wars of 480–479 again, the navy may have consisted of about 1,200 ships. It was not until the reign of Philip II that Macedon would undertake serious ship construction.

Greece too had reached a higher level of sophistication than the young Macedonian kingdom possessed, and interest in the area of Macedonia on the part of the Greek world was closer and far more constant than that of the Persians. Even in the Bronze Age, pottery is evidence of contact with the Mycenaean world by the fourteenth century and continuing into the twelfth century. In addition to imports from Greece, local production imitates Mycenaean examples. The contact seems not to have produced in Macedonia a citadel-centered system akin to that of Greece, at least according to current evidence. On the other hand, it does illustrate the fluidity of contact between Greece and Macedonia. The interaction ended

with the collapse of the Bronze Age kingdoms in most of the eastern Mediterranean region. As a result, there was little contact between Greece and Macedonia in the late second millennium and the early centuries of the first millennium.

That situation changed in the ninth century when mainland Greeks began to venture again to the sea. Not surprisingly, the first attempts were made in more local waters, such as the coastal region of the northern Aegean. As early as the ninth century, Greeks from the island of Euboia were founding trading settlements in that region such as Sindos, near modern Thessalonike, which had its origins in the ninth century and enjoyed a long life into the late Roman period. Its early prosperity is demonstrated by the richness of burial offerings there, including elegant gold jewelry by the sixth century and, by the fourth, wealth that allowed the sacrifice of five horses and two dogs in a cemetery of 47 graves – an offering normally associated with elite burials. Greeks from other regions followed suit in planting settlements particularly in the three-pronged peninsula known as the Chalkidike, opposite the small core of the realm of the Macedonian people. In the late seventh and sixth centuries, other Greek states penetrated the Propontis and beyond into the Black Sea. Eventually the littoral of that sea would be the location of many independent Greek communities. Certainly there were non-Greek people dwelling behind the coastal band, but they too would experience both the pressure and the cultural influence of their Greek neighbors.

While the Greek states, or poleis, were small and autonomous, their common culture had produced a powerful military machine in the form of the hoplite phalanx that had been employed by most of the Greek world since the seventh century. Clad in helmets, cuirasses, and greaves, and carrying a round shield called a *hoplon* on the left and a long spear on the right, the hoplites marched into combat in unison in ranks and rows, protecting one another and ready to step forward should a soldier in the front rank be wounded or killed. The effectiveness of the phalanx defeated the vast army of the Persians at Marathon in 490 and again at Plataia in 479, after

which it remained the redoubtable tool of land warfare to the second century. Regular warfare between the poleis was a primary, but not an exclusive, reason for calling up the citizen hoplites; neighboring regions drew the attention of the Greeks more and more in the fifth and fourth centuries.

Naval power as well had grown steadily since the late Dark Age. It was essential for the trade and colonization that jointly propelled the extension of Greek communities from the late eighth to the mid-sixth centuries. But military use of Greek ships is attested early in the Archaic period. That naval superiority was not achieved immediately is revealed by the rout of a Greek fleet off the southern coast of Anatolia reported to have occurred in 696, but the important point is that Greek society was marked by the need for and interest in seafaring from the Neolithic Age. By the early fifth century, when the Athenians had requested Apollo's advice concerning the best means to withstand the Persian attack, the answer of the Delphic oracle was "Rely on the wooden wall." Rightly interpreting this, the Athenians used the find of a new vein of silver to create a fleet of 200 triremes. The fleet proved the wisdom of Apollo, particularly at the battles of Salamis and Mycale but later as well.

Once the Persian menace had been repulsed, the fleet served as the core of a league of primarily Aegean states whose purpose was to end the Persian threat permanently. With that goal accomplished, the fleet became the linchpin of the powerful Athenian Empire that grew from the once voluntary league. As discussed in chapter 4, Macedonian timber was essential to the construction of ships for that fleet, one strong lure for Athenian intervention in Macedonian affairs. Athens' interests in the northern Aegean, established perhaps as early at the late sixth century, were another magnet. Athens grew increasingly dependent on external sources for grain, and an excellent source existed in the states of the Black Sea. The rapidly expanding polis also required ships to deliver that grain, but lacked timber for their construction. Macedonia was one of the best suppliers of timber.

Macedonian Resources to Confront Competitors

In sum, Macedonian borders were fluid because of natural features and the temperament of other peoples in the region. To preserve a political identity would demand constant military vigilance. However, by comparison with the military capability of its neighbors, Macedon was seriously disadvantaged. As mentioned above, Philip levied a force of approximately 10,600 infantry and cavalry in 359. Inasmuch as the threat of the Illyrians was of momentous consequences, it is likely that Philip raised as large a force as possible. By contrast, we have noted that Xerxes levied a force of one quarter of a million for his campaign against Greece. Even the single polis of Athens had a citizen population of between 45,000 and 60,000 adult males, that is, hoplites, in the mid-fifth century. To deal with challenges from the sea, a Macedonian navy was virtually nonexistent well into the reign of Philip. By comparison, Athens alone contributed 200 or more triremes to the united Greek naval force against the Persian invasion in 480.

The early social structure of the Macedonian kingdom increased its weakness as a unified, powerful entity. The majority of the population was accustomed to life in dispersed villages, garnering a livelihood through herding, agriculture, fishing, and hunting. In the smaller regions that were eventually united under the control of an Argead ruler, aristocratic families akin to the Argeads directed the collective life of residents in their sphere of influence. To maintain their own positions and to preserve the independence of their realms, the heads of these families required sufficient wealth and military might. That many of them were able to retain these requisites to power is shown in the history of centralization in the region: unification was not a natural or trouble-free process, since loyalties to important families persisted. Even when centralization was underway, regions could and did break away. During the reign of Perdikkas (454–413), the region of Lynkestis in upper Macedonia was autonomous and efforts to reunite it with lower Macedonia were unsuccessful. The leader of the separatist

movement, Arrhabaios, was able to raise a force of combined infantry and cavalry; to defeat that army required a force of 3,000 Greek infantry, all the Macedonian cavalry, 1,000 Chalkidians, and a "great throng of barbarians" (Thukydides IV.124). Loss of regional contingents would be a serious detriment to Macedonia's capability to defend itself and, indeed, a coalition of regional leaders would likely destroy every semblance of unity.

In the absence of Macedonian documents describing the nature of society, scholars often look to Homeric society for an analogy. In the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, one man exercises greater authority than his peers. Agamemnon is the acknowledged leader of the Greek effort to take Troy, while Odysseus' elevated position in the island kingdom is the cause of the unhappy situation that has worsened during his 20-year absence from his realm. However, neither Agamemnon nor Odysseus enjoys absolute power: Agamemnon cannot prevent the angry departure of Achilles from the war effort, and Odysseus must slaughter all the aspirants for his position before he can reclaim it. In sum, a king must be able to assert his right to rule by physical means. The story of the Argeads is strikingly similar. In the circumstances at the time Philip became king, rival claimants existed in three stepbrothers, the infant son of his older brother Perdikkas, and members of other branches of the Argead line. Like Agamemnon, an Argead king could not prevent a leader theoretically allied with him from withdrawing, and like Odysseus, Philip removed rivals by physical force.

So also does the role of the non-aristocratic element of Macedonia resemble that of the ordinary men in the Greek force camped near Troy, who, although they are present at gatherings of the entire force, are expected only to listen to the words of their leaders and occasionally shout their approval. The single ordinary man who speaks out at Troy is quickly beaten for his brashness. Though the fellows of the beaten man are sorry for his plight, they collectively feel "Never again will a haughty spirit rouse him to quarrel with the *basileis* in reproachful words" (*Iliad* II.276–7). Akin to the mass of Achaians "who are no account in battle or counsel" at Troy,

non-aristocratic Macedonians comprise an assembly, an army assembly that has certain rights: acclamation of their kingly leader and decision-making in treason trials. While some modern scholars doubt the importance and regular practice of these rights, they may well have been in place in early Macedonian history in the form of the same rough, spontaneous gatherings that the Homeric epics describe. Even though ties existed with ruling families in upper Macedonia, albeit often tenuous, there was little to forge a bond between the non-elite living some distance from the core of lower Macedonia. Lynkestians would appreciate, and perhaps fear, the power of the Lynkestian royal family far more than that of the ruling Argead, a situation echoed in the several other once-independent states.

If the kingdom of Macedon were to survive, and much more if it were to become a major player in affairs of the Balkan-Aegean region, elimination of its vulnerabilities was essential. The first need was for strong defense of its territory and resources; in other words, the creation of a strong, stable military arm. Since threats regularly came from all directions the force must be large and, at unpredictable times of the year, ready manpower must be constantly available. The core region of Macedon was insufficient in resources and manpower to meet the array of threats and to provide a standing force. It is estimated that an army of between 8,000 and 10,000 constituted the Macedonian force before the time of Philip II. Thus, when the Thracians under Sitalkes attacked Macedonia in 429 with an army of 15,000 men of which 5,000 were cavalry, Perdikkas refused to engage in battle because of the disproportion of forces (Thukydides II.98.3 and II.100.5). Reassertion of alliances with at least the adjacent ring of kingdoms was needed to secure the support of both aristocratic and non-aristocratic elements: ordinary free men to provide the bulk of the infantry, and aristocratic families to contribute the cavalry branch of the army as well as the corps of its officers. The difficulty of the task is shown in the amount of time required to achieve it. Certain steps were taken in the fifth century, but it was only in the reign of Philip II that the loyalty of the people and the aristocracy was more secure.

Somewhat paradoxically, the inherent weakness of fluid boundaries seems to have been the key to a solution. Illyrian attacks from the northwest and Paionian incursions from the north would pass through regions of upper Macedonia en route to lower Macedonia, while Greek hoplite forces could harass the peoples of Elimeia and Pieria as they marched toward Pella. A sense of common danger combined with alliances in the past may well have prompted a perception that some type of union might be in the best interests of the entire region. Moreover, degrees of unification had occurred in the past when the force of centralization had been in lower Macedonia.

Another force for cooperation may have been kinship amongst the peoples of upper and lower Macedonia by the fifth and fourth centuries. As Harry Dell described the geography of the region, its heartland was the Macedonian plain. Beyond the first natural barrier, the Bermion mountain range, the Makednian groups that initially had inhabited the valleys and mountains were only later replaced by the Illyrians. The success of the Illyrian incursion in 360 stirred up more threats in the north as Paionians began to pillage in the upper Axios river valley. The combination may well have been a spur to the unification of the Makednians – if only temporarily. A strong leader might fashion a more lasting union.

Military Means of Unification

If appreciation of a need for common defense ignited the unification, a commitment that would last longer than a temporary crisis had to be forged. Given the nature of leadership in Macedon and neighboring states, success was closely related to the personal skills of leaders.

Our sources refer to the Macedonian king as *basileus* and his rule as *basileia*, but whether the Macedonians themselves before the reign of Philip II knew their leaders as *basileis* cannot be determined. The coins struck by Philip do not bear the title, and it is only toward

the end of the reign of Alexander the Great that we find a coin inscribed with the two words *Alexandrou* and *basileos*. Even if the term had been used by earlier Argead rulers, its meaning would not be comparable with that sense inherent in the more familiar Greek usage as, for instance, the Athenian archon called *basileus,* one of several officials whose holders were chosen on an annual basis and for prescribed responsibilities. Rather, the sum of the powers and prerogatives of Macedonian kings was similar in many respects to that of the kings of the Homeric epics: through the reign of Alexander III, the king was essentially a military leader, and his responsibilities and attendant privileges stemmed from that role. In both cases, too, kings ruled by means of personal ability rather than as public, corporate embodiment of the state. Macedonian kings were always more or less successful owing to their individual qualities of leadership – doers of great deeds, speakers of persuasive words akin to Odysseus, and, we should add, exemplars of guile and quick action, often of a ruthless nature. While it seems quite certain that Philip II added administrative elements to rule during his reign, the erection of a full civilian administrative structure would be the task of the Antigonid successors of Alexander in the third century.

A Macedonian king had to possess pronounced leadership ability to personally command and rule; an ability to select capable subordinates was important but insufficient. As the early history of the kingdom demonstrates, the primary function of a king was to defend and preserve the kingdom from internal and external threats. To do so, he led his men in battle personally. Perdikkas found it necessary to seek the intervention of the Spartans to preserve the integrity of Macedon, but when the Spartan force arrived, Perdikkas added a Macedonian contingent under his command, and jointly the forces marched to compel the Lynkestian leader to bring his region of upper Macedonia back into alliance with Perdikkas. If a king could not lead brilliantly and personally in battle he was not fit to be a Macedonian ruler. Thus although kingship often passed from father to son, the son of Perdikkas III was clearly unfit by his age to display this requisite ability; kingship therefore passed from

older brother to younger brother, from Perdikkas to Philip. Stature in the eyes of soldiers – especially those from once-independent kingdoms – had to be high to win not only their respect but their initial acclamation.

Inasmuch as Macedonian kingship was a form of personal leadership, personal allegiance rather than a constitutional base provided its underpinnings. The king stood at the center of various ties of loyalty cemented by his own special military, religious, and economic standing. As we have seen, the fundamental source of a king's power was his military leadership, without which there would be no kingdom to rule. Consolidation of the kingdom and expansion, once control of the core was secure, demanded a strong military presence prepared to act in quick response. While many of the elements of the Macedonian army as it is known from sources concerned with Philip and Alexander had been developed in the fifth century, Philip's efforts produced what has been described as a military revolution.

The first element was a force of sufficient size. We have mentioned the limited size of the Macedonian army in the reign of Perdikkas. Its small number of troops may be related to the Lynkestian disavowal of allegiance to the Argead realm, thereby eliminating an important source of recruits. In meeting the Illyrian invasion of 360, the king Perdikkas III lost 4,000 of his army, which may have been part of the 10,000 figure generally accepted as the maximum size of a Macedonian army before the reign of Philip II. Obviously Philip's first responsibility on being acclaimed king was to recruit another force to reckon with the Illyrian menace. We are told that his force was 10,000 infantry and 600 cavalry. By simple mathematics, subtracting the dead left by the Illyrians, this was 4,000 more men than the maximum that the core of Macedon could field. Although we do not know the state of alliances with upper Macedonian realms in 360/59 it is unlikely that they were firm; that the events of the first four decades of the fourth century had undermined the links is shown in the need for Amyntas III to turn to major Greek states for assistance because of the lack of

dependable aid closer at hand. It may well have been the Illyrian victory that provided new recruits. Is it far-fetched to propose that the 4,000 or more troops needed to withstand the next invasion of Illyrians – or Thracians or Greeks – came from parts of upper Macedonia in response to the clearly apparent common danger? Support may be found in the presence of Philip's trusted general Parmenion in the first years of Philip's reign: Parmenion was from upper Macedonia.

Who would command a force composed of regional contingents? At one level, the leader of each region would be its commander, a command structure comparable to that described in the *Iliad*. Again, as at Troy, at a higher level, there is recognition in battle that "a situation with many lords is not good. Let there be one lord, one *basileus*" (*Iliad* II.204–5). Certain prestige, previous alliances, and provision of the largest portion of the force would point to the likelihood of Argead supreme command. For a period of time, a bond similar to that between the Argead king and his own contingent would extend to troops from other regions.

The bond was firm between the Argead ruler and the men who were essential to the preservation of the kingdom: each was dependent upon the other. It was the right of the army assembly to acclaim its leader, namely the king, who, in turn, had the responsibility of leading his army to victory. Success would bring rewards – booty, land grants, advancement in rank, and indeed longer life – bestowed by the victorious commander. As early as the reign of Alexander I, sources report the creation of a body of Macedonian soldiery known as the foot-companions of the king (*pez-hetairoi)* alongside the existing *hetairoi* or companions of aristocratic status. Although opinion about the accuracy of the attribution is divided, Alexander may well have been sufficiency impressed by the success of the heavy-armed infantry of the Greeks against the Persian forces to introduce a similar formation among his Macedonians. However, as we have seen, few developments in early Macedonian life were permanent; it was regularly necessary to repeat previous innovations.

Consequently, Philip surely made innovations in the role of the Macedonian infantry, a subject we will consider below. To extend the cooperation of regional units beyond the perceived crisis at hand, Philip had to gain rewards to bestow on all of the army's companies. Such rewards coupled with incentives were likely to cement the bond of allegiance between a more diverse army assembly, drawn from regions beyond the kingdom's core, and its Argead commander. And inasmuch as there was an obvious need for a standing force, a career as a soldier might be preferable to one as a shepherd in the highland mountains.

Could the aristocratic families of the highlands be similarly persuaded? Philip's initial success in keeping the Illyrians at bay may have been a powerful incentive to continue the cooperation. Parmenion's high command position by 356, when he led the Macedonians to victory over the Illyrians, is evidence of at least one convert. The list of adherents from once-independent regions grows fuller over time, as we shall see in developments in Philip's relationships with other princely houses.

In addition to a sizeable infantry and cavalry force, a general needed subordinate commanders. Branches of the Argead line were a source, but regional royal lines were likely to be preferable: in the first place, these kings were not direct threats to Argead rule and, second, there was a natural bond between these aristocrats and the contingents from their regions. Philip implemented or re-established means of building an incentive to cooperation. Certain features are attributed to the reign of Archelaos, but conditions between his death in 399 and Philip's accession in 359 had hardly been productive of larger regional cooperation. Earlier steps had to be retaken. The key to Philip's scheme was a distinction between noble and non-noble military functions, and the qualifications needed to fulfill those functions. The division is noted most basically in the two terms *hetairoi* and *pez-hetairoi*. Nobles were the king's companions while non-nobles were his foot-companions. From the former came his generals and other officials; the latter supplied the larger bodies of infantry (known as shield-bearers or hypaspists) and

cavalry. Within each arm of the force special units were royal units. While a king might hope to constantly recruit his subordinates from loyal regions of the realm, he might be well advised to create a *cursus honorum* or career path.

Philip did just this, early in his reign; by the time of his death it was fully operational (Arrian IV.13.1). A foundation stone was the training of youthful sons of princely houses during their teenage years, when they would reside in Pella to be trained as *paides basilikoi*, or the king's boys. Their stay in Pella caused them to be known as "Pellaios" in the sources. The number of these youths may have ranged from about 85 to 200. An expansion in numbers of recruits occurred as the territory of the kingdom increased: the group included youths from upper and lower Macedonia, Epiros, and regions of Greece.

Much of the training would have been physical: the regimentation has echoes of the rigorous Spartan education of males as well as that of sons of the Persian aristocratic families. As Xenophon's description of the Persian custom concludes, its purpose was that immediately the boys would know how to rule and to be ruled (*Anabasis* I.9.4). As the king's boys, they served and guarded him, surely important for any Macedonian king. Especially successful – and hopefully trustworthy – students of this training would eventually gain a permanent position serving as one of seven bodyguards (*somotophylakes*) of the king, protecting him constantly.

For some of the youths, the experience had an intellectual component as well: the tradition suggests that a few of the king's boys participated with Alexander in the instruction provided by Aristotle. These close associates of the king's son(s) are described as being "nourished with" that son – or *syntrophoi*. The young men who were among the *syntrophoi* of Alexander included Hephaistion, Ptolemaios son of Lagos, Seleukos, and perhaps Perdikkas and Lysimachos, all of whom would be major officers under Alexander, and all of whom but Hephaistion survived to be counted among the most powerful of Alexander's successors. Their time at court was also intended to strengthen ties of loyalty to the ruling Argead

house, thus undercutting the separatist tendencies that had been problematic throughout most of Macedonian history.

In addition to a personal guard, a king had need of highly trained men who could serve as commanders of divisions of his army. An army of 35,000, the size that Alexander inherited from Philip, would require a number of such officers. Additional officers were required for garrisons and affairs in Pella itself, for the ruling king could not personally oversee all of the training of the king's boys, or scrutinize the receipt and allocation of revenues, or receive and draft every item of correspondence. Positions of increasing importance would be the goal of the aristocratic youth trained initially at Pella.

However, men entrusted with major responsibilities were more seasoned than the recently graduated king's boys. An intermediate level of training for the king's boys seems likely to have involved actual combat. A sensible suggestion is that at the age of 19 or 20, the officers-in-training served in the royal units of the infantry or cavalry that had been distinguished from the regular units by Philip; participants were the elite *hetairoi* and they would engage the enemy under the king's own command. Thus those aristocratic young men who had begun their training at Pella would continue to train as his shield-bearers and horsemen under the very eyes of the king.

In addition to the developments in both the structure of the army and the program of recruitment of subordinates, Philip made major innovations in weapons and armor, formation of troops, tactics, and professionalization of the status of the army.

In basic structure, corps of armed infantry continued to be an essential element of warfare, as they had been in Greece from the Archaic Age. The Macedonian infantry, however, differed from the Greek in several respects. Drawing on his personal knowledge of changes introduced in Thebes in the 380s and 370s, Philip utilized a deep formation: a Macedonian phalanx unit was 16 ranks deep and 16 rows in width. By comparison the Greek phalanx had been only 4–8 ranks in depth. In the Macedonian formation, those in the front rank were commanders of the men behind them. The soldiers or hoplites were protected by greaves, helmet, a metal breast plate, and

a shield; they carried a *sarissa*, or wooden spear, approximately 13–14 feet (about 4 m) long, and a sword as a secondary weapon. The equipment was lighter in weight than that of the Greek hoplites, a feature that increased the speed of the force in travel.

As noted above, the infantry was more varied than the Greek phalanx. Three thousand men comprised an elite corps of the infantry, the royal hypaspists. Although their origin is unclear, the unit may have begun as a small bodyguard of the king. More lightly armed than the regular foot-soldiers, the elite hypaspists were often stationed on the right wing of the army between the cavalry on the right and the phalanx on the left. Another contingent of even more lightly armed troops of archers and slingers provided long-range capability. Its goals in battle also differed from those of the Greek infantry: its task was to pinion the enemy force so that cavalry units and light infantry could attack from the rear and the flanks, as well as taking opportunities to penetrate gaps created in the enemy's infantry line.

Equally essential to military success was the Macedonian cavalry. We have noted the suitability of the Macedonian and Thessalian territory for horse-breeding. Unlike the situation of much of the southern Greek world, Macedonian use of horses in warfare was common before the time of Philip, and successful kings had to be accomplished horsemen as well as trusted leaders of their foot-soldiers. A token of the status of the cavalry is indicated by the naming of the best cavalry as the "king's companions"; the king himself commanded this special unit. Formed in squadrons under individual commanders, the units were shock troops intent on penetrating gaps in the opponent's line. Riders wore breast plates and carried wooden *sarissas* some 9 feet (3 m) long, as well as long curving swords. The *sarissa* was pointed with iron at both ends so that it could be used both as a spear and a stabbing blade at closer quarters. As in the case of the infantry, there were various mounted units. Some cavalry were mounted archers while others rode in advance of a moving army in the capacity of scouts.

Before combat, the Macedonian fighting force was assisted by the intelligence that the scouts provided, as well as by improvements in

logistics that enabled a full army to move some 15 miles (24 km) a day, and lighter troops to travel at more than 40 miles (65 km) a day. To facilitate the taking of fortified centers the army was aided by the siege engines that Philip brought into his art of war, such as torsion catapults that could shoot bolt-heads some 1,600 feet (500 m) and hurl stones weighing 50 pounds (over 22 kg), and huge siege towers. All troops were trained by constant drill, a practice that the Athenian statesman Demosthenes regarded as "cheating": "Summer and winter are alike to him . . . there is no season during which he suspends operations" (*Third Philippic* 50).

In naval capability, Philip expanded Macedonian strength by the creation of a fleet. Some ship construction is likely to have occurred in early periods; as we have seen, the excellent timber resources of Macedonia were eagerly sought by Greek states for use in their own ship-building. However, scholars regularly credit Philip with the construction of a fleet, particularly to engage seaworthy neighbors in the eastern Aegean, Propontis, and Black Sea. In addition to possessing the necessary resources, he realized that naval power was essential to any effort to counter the Athenian presence in those regions. By 340, Philip had both a fleet and a motivation to enter those waters, campaigning first in the Chersonese and then in the Propontis. His fleet enabled him to lay siege to both Perinthos and Byzantium. That Macedon had not developed great expertise in Poseidon's realm is demonstrated in the failure of both attempts. The Athenian fleet of only 40 ships was able to drive the Macedonian fleet from Byzantium into the Bosporos and soon into the Black Sea. On the other hand, that same fleet was able to seize the entire Athenian grain fleet of 230 ships. Macedonian prowess in maritime warfare would be delayed to the second quarter of the third century, but its importance was acknowledged centuries earlier.

The account of extricating the fleet marooned in the Black Sea serves to show another feature of Macedonian military success, namely counter-intelligence. Philip appears to have been adept at sending reports to his subordinate officers that were truly intended to fall into enemy hands. To aid the fleet, he sent orders to

Antipatros, the officer in charge of affairs in Thrace, that he should immediately depart the Propontis area. When this "information" happened to reach the Athenian squadron at the Bosporos, as Philip hoped and probably expected that it would, the Greek fleet set sail for the Aegean coast of Thrace, thus allowing the Macedonian fleet to sail without hindrance through the Bosporos into the Propontis. Similar "interceptions" of information recur at many crucial points in Philip's military career.

Military Personnel

The expansion and diversification of military units required more personnel and greater specialized training of them. Success in the field against opponents could supply both a larger pool for recruitment and recruits with special expertise, such as the Agrianes, who dwelt in the watershed of the Strymon River and were noted for their skill in archery, and the Thessalians, the most accomplished horsemen among the Greeks. Since expansion had been accordion-like during Macedonian history, it is not surprising that military innovations, particularly the strengthening of units of foot-soldiers, are associated with the periods of expansion. Especially notable were the increases in territory during the reigns of Alexander I in the fifth century and Philip II in the mid-fourth. The original core of the kingdom in the sixth and early fifth centuries had been a half-moon shape of territory along the western coast of the Thermaic Gulf, extending a short distance along the north littoral. Under the rule of Alexander I, its size increased to 6,600 square miles (17,200 km^2) with the addition of portions of upper Macedonia. By the end of the reign of Philip II, Macedonian control encompassed 16,680 square miles (43,210 km^2). The size of population in Philip's time is estimated at 700,000, an increase from 250,000 slightly more than a century earlier. Of this number, 160,000 to 200,000 would be adult males, the pool for military recruitment.



Map 5.1 Expansion of the Macedonian Core under Philip II

Recruits were utilized as both infantry and cavalry. As described above, there were special units among both the foot-soldiers and horsemen, and while the evidence does not describe the nature of training, it does indicate that drill was constant. The *cursus honorum* of aristocratic youth that began at the early age of about 13 was also constant, designed to produce effective and loyal officers. Evidence suggests that it was very successful, although not entirely. Initial advancement may have been a humbling experience, as it placed an elite youth in the rank of foot-soldier. On the other hand, the young men were part of a smaller, aristocratic unit of infantry retaining a special association with the king. In this capacity they continued to exercise their original responsibility of guarding the king on the field of battle and, in the process, could prove themselves worthy of higher commands. Sufficient information about the

officers of Alexander survives to demonstrate the importance of the early training in defining men who were eventually appointed to key positions. A similar hierarchy existed in the cavalry, where an elite corps was the king's troop. In this capacity, too, the mettle of younger men would be tested for future assignments. Non-aristocrats were also required as officers of the regular hypaspists. Although the majority of these commanders were of obscure background, it seems reasonable to envision a ladder of advancement here as well as for the royal troops.

An especially prized position was to be one of seven personal guards of the king, or *somatophylakes*, while he was at Pella and also when he was on campaign. The position was held for life unless grounds for dismissal emerged. Three of Philip's *somatophylakes* were inherited by Alexander: Arybbas of Epiros, perhaps a kinsman of Olympias, traveled with Alexander as far as Egypt, where he died of illness; one Demetrios continued as Alexander's guard until he was dismissed on suspicion of disloyalty in 327; and Balakros served with Alexander through the battle of Issos in 333, when he was appointed as satrap in Kilikia. In addition to the personal guards, all of the king's subordinate commanders were crucial to Macedonian effectiveness in war. The examples of three of the most powerful of Philip's men will serve to indicate their personal history and the nature of their careers.

Antipatros, born shortly after 400, was Philip's elder by 17 or 18 years, and thus he had been active in the service of Philip's father and his older brothers who had preceded Philip as kings. He was the son of Iolaos from a place known as Paliouria, whose location is uncertain. That Iolaos was of an aristocratic family is supported by his designation by Perdikkas II as general of the cavalry in 432 (Thukydides I.62.2) and by the status of his children: two of Antipatros' sons – Philippos and Iolaos – are attested as *somotophylakes* of the king, and his daughters were important in forging alliances through marriage. He himself was called on for a full range of services: as general of campaigns; to negotiate terms of peace at the conclusion of the Sacred War in 346 and with Athens after the

Macedonian victory at Chaironeia in 338; to represent Philip at important panhellenic events, as at the Pythian Games in 342; and to serve as regent in Philip's absence. In sum, Antipatros is a representative of the aristocratic families of the core of the kingdom, who, at least in this case, could be relied on as allies of the Argead king.

Parmenion, born at approximately the same time as Antipatros, was if not as important to Philip, then nearly so. Plutarch reported that Philip said that while the Athenians selected 10 generals each year, he had for many years found only one general, Parmenion. (Plutarch, *Apophth. Phil.* ii = *Moralia* 177c). The son of Philotas, Parmenion's origins were probably in upper Macedonia. After assisting Philip in stabilizing his rule in the first troubled years, Parmenion led campaigns defeating an Illyrian force in 356; negotiated terms of peace along with Antipatros in 346; and was selected as one of the commanders of the advance force in Asia Minor in 337. His son, also named Philotas, was one of the king's boys, and advanced to major positions in the course of his career. A younger son, Nikanor, was an officer of the companion hypaspists and was appointed as governor in western India, while the youngest son, Hektor, died during Alexander's campaign in Egypt. This important family illustrates the importance of ties with the larger territory of Macedonia, along with their dangers: Parmenion and Philotas, both found guilty of treason against Alexander III, were executed.

Antigonos, known as the one-eyed, had the same birth-year as Philip. Antigonos is described as a comrade of both Philip and Alexander (Justin XVI.1.12), an association that presupposes an importance in the reigns of both Argead kings, although we know little of his earlier activity. Consequently, his status and even the original location of the Antigonids are uncertain, although a case has been made for Beroia, north of the Haliakmon River in southern Hemathia. No clues to his status exist in the surviving evidence of career training for aristocratic youth: no matter what his status was, it is most unlikely that he would have been among the king's boys given the date of his birth. What is more, the institution took

its formal shape during the reign of Philip. Nor would his one son who lived to manhood have been trained at Pella; rather he was raised with his father in Anatolia, where Antigonos was posted by Alexander in 333. Another indication of his original status may be found in his command post at the time of Alexander's crossing into Anatolia: Antigonos was entrusted with command of the allied Greek hoplites, a major post, to be sure, but not as elevated as a command in the royal units of the Macedonian hypaspists and cavalry. All of these details may suggest a non-elite status. On the other hand, his wife may have been related to Philip as a member of one branch of the Argead line. Combining these few clues may reveal a third category of Macedonians drawn into the military apparatus of the expanding kingdom: members of families resident in the core of the kingdom but not likely contenders for the Argead throne. Not aristocratic by birth, they were nevertheless able to rise in position and stature through marriage and by their proven worth and loyalty to the reigning Argead king. The pool of subordinates had been narrow during much of earlier Macedonian history. Philip had to think creatively about the kind of men who had not only the skills but good reasons for loyalty to a commander-in-chief.

Results of the Military Reformation

In sum, Philip fashioned an effective structure of organization and training for the primary demands of his realm – defense of the core area followed by control over peripheral areas and offensive action against troublesome neighbors at a greater distance. The essential tool was a large, well-trained army ready to act on little notice. Large numbers of troops were needed – ordinary infantry, expert cavalry, special units such as archers. Leadership of these units required considerable numbers of well-trained commanders. The centralization of command was essential to coordinate units and subordinate officials. Without it, regional interests fueled by the ambitions of local leaders would quickly undercut the power of the nominal Argead

ruler. One aspect of centralization was achieved by concentrating activities in one location: embassies, development of siege machinery, training of future officers, planning of campaigns, control of resources, and the private life of the king and his family all focused on Pella. As the archaeological evidence from Pella reveals, the picture of a basically unstructured political organization there seems in need of rethinking. While not yet comparable to the institutionalized political organization of contemporary Persia, there are clear indications of regularization. Perhaps, as it has been argued on analogy with medieval European institutions, household functionaries of the king were coming to exercise administrative positions. But even our meager evidence indicates that Pella was the seat of regular departments of state: a secretariat, development of military technology, control of allocation of resources. The proliferation of activities at Pella obviously demanded ongoing oversight by a variety of officials trained for their duties, competent to manage the affairs of others under their charge, and hopefully loyal.

The decisive voice in all of those activities was that of the king: as his campaigns were successful, he had incentives to offer common soldiers and elite forces alike. By building a ladder of training for future officers and locating the training in Pella, Philip forged new links between the adolescent youth who hoped to be major figures in what promised to be lucrative enterprises: only one person at a time might be ruler of an independent Lynkestis or Orestis, but many Lynkestians and Orestians could enjoy a career of important command in the Macedonian state. The Argead king also hoped for personal advantage in the form of his own security, which had so often been at risk through military incursions into the kingdom, through the plots of other members of the Argead line, and through the ambitions of rulers of once-independent realms.

Such emphasis on the importance of kingly leadership ignores the other institutions of administration present in most states. Was there not another political body or institution of major significance in the administrative life of Macedon in addition to personal leadership and the military assembly? There is no indication of a

written code of laws regulating justice and its administration. Customary law in oral form appears to have defined rights and responsibilities.

Was there no advisory council? For its early history, there is no indication of the existence of a formal council, although it is likely that an informal council played a role in decision-making. The Homeric analogy may again be relevant. Just as Agamemnon took counsel with various kings, so Philip would consult with his senior officers, men like Antipatros, Parmenion, and Antigonos, to coordinate campaigns or delegate responsibilities. Extant sources relate such consultations between Alexander and his officers. One of the best known is the discussion of Dareios' offer of concessions as Macedonian successes multiplied:

> When these offers were reported in a gathering of the companions, it is said that Parmenion told Alexander that were he Alexander he would be pleased with these terms, ending the war without further danger. Alexander replied to Parmenion that if he were Parmenion he would do just that but since he was Alexander, he would reply to Dareios just as he had indicated. (Arrian II.25.2)

That is, Alexander would not accept the proffered terms.

Participants in these sessions are likely to have come from the king's closest companions, although this is not to argue that there existed a fixed body of companions forming the council. Those men closest to the king would often be away on other delegated responsibilities. However, the individuals most trusted by the king constituted a powerful force. Alexander owed his assumption of the kingship largely to the support given him by Philip's companions.

The successes of Macedon during the reigns of Philip and Alexander reveal one side of the results of the innovations of Philip. Jack Ellis has expressed the other side of those results precisely and well:

> But if the army was at once the instrument and the expression of the new unity it was all the more essential that military objectives

> were constantly in mind and, more important, that military successes were won, lest it turn the newly found energies in upon itself and the state. While, that is, the revolution was at least shaped by Philip's own determination and perception, he was as bound as anyone else by its implications; he was the rider of the tiger he had released. (p. 9)

The new army was the tool for unification, expansion, and centralization under the leadership of a king ruling from Pella. It was necessary for the stability of both the kingdom and the power of the Argead kings. Consequently, it must be permanently in place. Its function, of course, was the maintenance of the integrity of the kingdom whatever its size. As enlargement and pacification of additional lands occurred, new objectives would be needed. Sustaining suitable opportunities for his force became an item of primary importance on the royal agenda.

The security of kingly power was also associated with military innovations both positively and negatively. The king's boys would be his guard in Pella, and the seven more senior *somatophylakes* exercised an even more demanding position in protecting their king from danger. Guards in both groups could have personal grievances, however: Philip was killed by one of his "boys," and one of Alexander's seven was alleged to have been involved in a conspiracy against the king. Many of Philip's troops and officers were from upper Macedonian regions and, like Parmenion, they served him well and rose to major command positions. An Alexander of the Lynkestian realm was one of the first to declare for Alexander III on the death of Philip, and he was with Alexander in his Persian campaign, given important positions such as command of the Thessalian cavalry. However, he was suspected of plotting against Alexander and was arrested, imprisoned, and eventually executed in 330. Junior officers, too, could be disloyal: one Amyntas, son of Antiochos, deserted from Alexander to Dareios, leading the Greek mercenaries at Issos. If the regular troops felt anger against their commander, mutiny was always possible in spite of the oath of

allegiance they had taken on the occasion of the accession of a king (Polybios XV.25.11; Curtius X.7.9).

The "tiger" had a powerful tail to lash against the Macedonian king as well as against enemies of the king and his kingdom. Its commander was well advised to keep a close watch on the movements of that tail.

6
Meeting the Distant Threat

In his broad retrospective *Memory and the Mediterranean*, Fernand Braudel wrote of "Alexander's mistake," namely leading his troops eastward rather than toward the west. Had he made the decision for the west, "might it not have pre-empted the destiny of Rome?" (p. 250). After all, contemporaries, even another Alexander – his brother-in-law who was king of Epiros – had turned their attention to Italy. However, few fared well. Surprisingly, Alexander III of Macedon enjoyed phenomenal success against the vast, wealthy, and mighty empire of Persia. The choice of foe and the Macedonian success both deserve consideration. Why was Persia Alexander's target? What was the condition of that empire in 336? In addition, there are several other issues that will help us understand Alexander himself: how deep was his knowledge of the Achaemenid Empire and how foreign were its structure and culture to him? Did the conquest of Persia influence his subsequent plans?

The Creation of the Achaemenid Empire

Complex cultures emerged in the late fourth millennium in the eastern Mediterranean in the form of individual city-states. As these Mesopotamian states expanded their territory, larger kingdoms arose

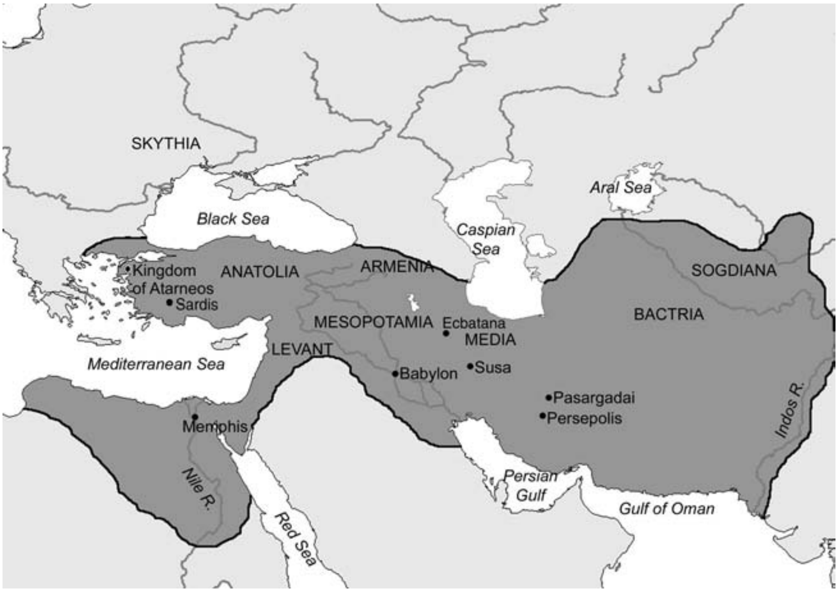
in the late third and second millennia in Egypt as well as the Near East. At the same time, those civilizations acted as magnets, drawing new peoples into their webs of activity. By the late second millennium, the eastern Mediterranean region was dominated by two major powers: Egypt in the south and the Hittite realm in the north. The still mysterious collapse of civilizations at the end of the second millennium atomized power bases for several centuries. However, in the sixth century, late entrants into the region drew together under a single ruler and expanded explosively, becoming the single empire in the eastern Mediterranean sphere. This synthesis was the Persian Empire. In reach, it was the largest state in Mediterranean and Near Eastern history until the consolidation of the Roman Empire: it stretched from Thrace to the Jaxartes River in the north, the Libyan coast to the Indos River in the south. The variety of peoples drawn together by the creation of this vast state was reflected in the philosophy of governance: its overlords encouraged the retention of local cultural traditions beneath the structure of uniform administration.

The empire was formed quickly in the sixth century BCE, when several states were contending for sovereignty following the collapse of Assyrian dominion in the Near East in 612. Primary contestants were the older kingdoms of Babylonia and Egypt, now freed from foreign control, and the Indo-European Medes, who had arrived more recently; their reach extended southward from west of the upper Tigris toward the Persian Gulf. In their successful drive, the Medes had established sovereignty over another Indo-European people, the Persians, who were less unified than their linguistic relatives and, thus, vulnerable to more powerful neighbors. A marriage between the daughter of the Median king and Kambyses I of Persia reversed the roles of the two peoples: a son of this marriage, Kyros by name, conspired against his Median grandfather, who capitulated in 559. Kyros was the first in the Achaemenid line of kings – named after a claimed ancestor of the line, Achaemenes – which continued until Alexander of Macedon assumed the kingship.

Kyros won the title "the Great" through a whirlwind career of establishing the basic boundaries of the empire. Having inherited

the Median quarrel with the Anatolian kingdom of Lydia, he took to the field with his army and decisively defeated the Lydian force in 546. Then he moved to the coast of Anatolia, thereby drawing the Greek poleis of Asia Minor into the expanding realm. In Mesopotamia, he was invited to assume management of Babylon, which he did in 538. With that acquisition, he gained the territory west of the Euphrates River. Persian soldiers were active in the east as well, in modern Afghanistan, outer Iran, and beyond to the borders of modern India. Kyros did not establish sovereignty over the third contestant for power; the addition of Egypt to the empire was left to his son and successor, Kambyses II (530–522) after Kyros had been slain in battle with the Massagetai in the northeastern portion of the realm. Kyros had previously named Kambyses king of Babylon, where he seems to have remained for much of his reign. In 526 he organized the invasion of Egypt, which was brought under Persian control by summer of 525. Apart from enlarging the empire, a fondness for atrocity describes his reputation in the accounts of Egyptians, Greeks, and Persians alike. He died, by his own hand or by murder, in 522.

With the inclusion of Egypt, the empire reached nearly its greatest size. It was clear that direct rule by a king situated in the old heartland of Persia would not provide effective control. Moreover, many of the incorporated territories had discrete boundaries as well as long-established systems of governance. The Achaemenids utilized both the recognized regions and their structures in devising their own administrative structure. The regions were satrapies, each ruled by a satrap, or "protector of the realm." Appointment by the king symbolized the fact that ultimate authority rested with him. Another tie existed in the personal bond between the satraps and the king: the importance of personal bonds of loyalty between individuals, so common in tribal societies, seems to have formed the basis of satrapal authority. Initially, satraps were members of important Persian families or clans whose support was essential to the stability of Achaemenid rule, rather than members of the ruling family itself. In some parts of the empire, local dynasts continued in power, carrying out the responsibilities of a satrap. Such was the case in island



Map 6.1 Achaemenid Persia

realms drawn into the empire. Evagoras of Cyprus is an example of the persistence of local forms of governance, albeit now under the oversight of the imperial structure.

Under Kyros and Kambyses, military responsibility was the chief duty of the satraps, for although formerly independent kingdoms and regions had been conquered, many were not thoroughly pacified. Even when peace had been established, the maintenance of internal order was an ongoing need. The support of troops added an economic dimension to the satraps' responsibilities: the levy and collection of taxes as well as the requisition of goods and perhaps land for garrisons would fall to the protector of each realm. Although changes to the nature of satrapal responsibilities occurred over the nearly two centuries between the death of Kambyses and the end of Achaemenid kingship, the essential structure of local control of regions within a centralized overlordship persisted.

Upon the death of Kambyses, a serious struggle for supreme power ensued, though the details are unclear. The contest ended in 522 with the success of Dareios I, a member of an important Persian family that had played a strong role in the formation of the empire under Kyros. His claim to be the ninth ruler of the Achaemenid line is problematic because of varying genealogies extant for Kyros and Dareios I, but Dareios' claim was respected by contemporaries and successors. His initial attention was directed toward quelling uprisings in many parts of the realm. With the support of leaders of loyal regions and their forces, Dareios pacified most of the rebels within a year, although revolts continued in some recalcitrant areas such as Babylon.

It may well have been the overly impressive military power of certain protectors of the realm that led to a restructuring of satrapal authority. The largely independent military authority of the satraps was now limited by the division of authority between two officials: the satrap was the chief civil authority, but military commanders within the satrapy were directly responsible to the Great King. Most likely associated with the attempt to rein in satrapal power was the institution of "king's scribes," "king's eyes," and "king's ears" to perform and monitor affairs in the provinces. That these innovations were not altogether successful is shown by the continuing difficulty in limiting the independent authority and means of the satraps apparent in events of the fifth and fourth centuries.

Dareios I is highly regarded for the erection of a sound administrative structure for the sprawling territory under Persian control, a structure that would endure to provide the framework for the control of the empire won by Alexander of Macedon. An inscription at Behistun from the time of Dareios describes the 22 lands that were subject to him. In terms of satrapal organization, the division was into 20. Many of the satrapies contained a number of major cities. As was the case in Mesopotamia and the Levant, these cities provided the means of another level of administration – military, fiscal, and secretarial – although in certain matters local

officials were subordinate to satrapal governance. Some cities had unique status: Babylon, for example, was at times under the control of one of the king's elder sons, likely as a training experience for his future when he succeeded his father. The elaborate administrative structure inherited from the past millennium and a half made Babylon a critical hub as well as an excellent training ground.

Tablets from Persepolis describe the ladder of power for the central satrap of Persis, a structure that may suggest similar arrangements elsewhere in the empire. One Pharnakes, a brother of Dareios' father, appears to have had charge of the financial, administrative, and royal household affairs of the whole region. An important subordinate official managed the treasury with its regional branches; another seems to have been responsible for coordination of production and supplies; and a third can be associated with the central chancery.

Other titles are recorded. Hyparchs held special commands; one such official had the responsibility for an important fleet base in Asia Minor at Kyme. An overarching military responsibility is attached to the official position of *karanos*; when the sources discuss a *karanos*, the responsibility is a command of a great army that combines the forces of more than a single satrap. One Abrokomas apparently held this position on the occasion of the revolt of the brother of a reigning king, who was pressed to draw upon all the military strength at his disposal, not merely that of the core region, that is, Persis.

Military might was essential to the preservation of the empire, and its organization was carefully defined. Infantry units appear to have been built in multiples often from 10 to 10,000, with commanders at each level. The most important, thus most privileged, unit was that of the 10,000 Persian Immortals who served as the king's own bodyguard in battle. Naval power was equally important to the security of the empire; the seaward regions – especially Phoenicia and Asia Minor – offered both ships and trained sailors. Military service was required of all peoples of the realm: in his account of the Persian advance into Greece under Xerxes,

Herodotos lists 45 different peoples. Another source for both soldiers and officers lay beyond the confines of Persian territory in the presence of the great numbers of mercenaries, both Greek and others, increasingly available for hire in the fourth and third centuries.

One feature of governance in many other states is largely absent: there appears to have been no formal consultative body in the Persian Empire. While the Greek historian of the Persian Wars, Herodotos, describes consultations between Xerxes and his key officials during the Greek campaign, no ongoing forum of discussion played a part in decision-making. Even the members of the seven major families who, in Herodotos' account, determined among themselves the successor to Kambyses do not act regularly as a group after the decision on the allotment of kingship. In fact, two of those families disappear from the record and descendants of the others are often found in posts far from the royal centers of Susa and Persepolis.

In addition to the division into administrative units and the creation of an organized official structure, the kings worked to tie the far-flung empire together through the building and maintenance of roads, bridges, and ferries. Especially remarkable is the "royal road" that stretched the 1,600 miles (2,600 km) from Susa to Sardis, the western capital of the empire. Provided with guard houses and garrisons, the road was relatively safe for travelers. Moreover, a relay system used by important couriers allowed messages to be relayed in approximately a week, while ordinary travel would require 90 days or more. The development of a single coinage was another form of unification, as it facilitated trade throughout the realm.

At the apex of this structure stood the king, virtually absolute, at least in theory. Kingship belonged to the lineage of Achaemenes, usually passed from father to son. An Achaemenid king ruled as the regent of Ahura-Mazda, the god of all that is good. "By the grace of Ahura-Mazda," the Behistun inscription of Dareios I proclaims, "I am king; Ahura-Mazda gave me the kingdom." His word was law; all people were subjected to him and all property was his, albeit through

the administrative ladder described above. Still, Achaemenid rulers proved their merit through their own deeds and many demonstrated their worthiness by their physical qualities. A court doctor described Dareios as the most handsome of men. Training in the physical arts of riding horses, throwing spears, and shooting arrows conditioned their physique and bearing. And they were made even more impressive by their clothing and jewels: the costume and jewels of one fourth-century king are said by Plutarch to have been valued at three million pounds of gold. Great numbers of servants holding parasols or flicking away insects or offering drink would add even more aura to the king. Other insignia proclaimed his lofty status: a sacred chariot, a magnificent royal tent, images engraved on the walls of the royal palaces. The Persian custom of acknowledging such status was a posture of obeisance as lesser men prostrated themselves in the presence of the king.

The king's well-being, and that of his wives and children, was protected and their pleasures assured. One royal prerogative was possession of a harem, often very large: Dareios III is reported to have



Figure 6.1 Cylinder seal of Dareios. © Copyright The Trustees of the British Museum

lost 329 members of his harem while fleeing Alexander after the battle of Issos. Equally important to his household were eunuchs, perhaps initially as attendants in the harem and caretakers of royal children. Over time, however, they assumed official positions and became confidants and advisors to the king himself.

This picture of the Persian imperial system would differ in various aspects over time. Scholars of Persian history describe its development as moving beyond feudal ties toward bureaucratic structures. With the growing officialdom, the personal leadership of the king was also transformed, and in the transformation, difficulties in maintaining cohesion throughout the vast territory are visible by the mid-fifth century.

Further Expansion

Before the flaws became serious Dareios I and his successor Xerxes determined to expand the realm. After dealing successfully with several uprisings in various parts of the empire and, perhaps, initiating administrative reforms, Dareios turned to further expansion in Skythia and Thrace and, possibly, also in the Indos River region by means of naval exploration from the Persian Gulf into the waters of the Gulf of Oman. In 499, he was forced to deal with another revolt, this time by the Greek states in western Anatolia. With the assistance of two mainland Greek states – Athens and Eretria on the island of Euboia – the insurgents succeeded in taking Sardis. Unable or unwilling to press on with military action, the Greeks were defeated and returned to Persian control by 494. The circumstances of the revolt, however, drew Persian attention to the pesky world of the Greek mainland, a world divided by hundreds of constantly quarreling independent states. Dareios organized two retaliatory actions against the mainland participants in the revolt: the first, in 492, was a maritime expedition into the northern Aegean. Although Thrace and Macedon submitted to Persian pressure, a large portion of the fleet was sunk in a gale off the eastern peninsula of the

Chalkidike with a great loss of men. By 490 the fleet was restored. Sailing through the Cycladic islands, it made for the strait between Euboia and the mainland of Attica to deal with the mainland contributors to the earlier Ionian Revolt. After Eretria was taken, its sanctuaries were burned and its people deported to the heartland of the Persian Empire. Then the Persians turned their attention to the second offender, disembarking on the plain at Marathon in eastern Attica, where 10,000 Athenians with a contingent from the small state of Plataia in central Greece had mustered to contend against a far larger force. To everyone's surprise the Persian effort at Marathon was defeated.

Dareios made no third attempt; revolt in Egypt claimed his immediate attention. In fact, the former satrapy was not yet restored to Persian control when Dareios died in 486 and his son Xerxes succeeded to the kingship. Only in the second year of the new king's reign was Egypt returned to satrapal status. It is important to note that its new "satrap" was a brother of Xerxes rather than a member of another aristocratic line. We will consider the significance of this change in policy later.

It was now possible for Xerxes to turn his attention to the unfinished business with Greece. Xerxes mounted a massive campaign to add the mainland of Greece to the Persian realm. A force approximately 250,000 strong, according to modern calculations, was assembled while preparations for the joint venture by land and sea were carefully made. A massive double bridge was erected across the Hellespont for men, animals, and provisions to make an easy crossing; food depots were established along the route; many Greek states were persuaded to ally themselves with the Persians or promised, if not formal alliance, at least neutrality. Xerxes was successful initially: the Macedonian king became a virtual vassal, with the northern kingdom serving as a staging ground for the southward thrust. The Greek forces holding the crucial pass at Thermopylai were defeated and, soon afterward, Athens was destroyed. Despite these victories, however, the Greeks prevailed by sea at Salamis in the Saronic Gulf, persuading Xerxes that he should return to his capital, and in the next year the Greek forces defeated the Persian land force left

behind at Plataia. On that same day, or not too distant from it, the Greek fleet won a decisive battle over the Persian fleet off the coast of Asia Minor. A dozen years later, a coalition of Greek states under Athenian hegemony dealt another defeat to the Persian fleet off the southern coast of Anatolia. This Greek success marked the finale in an attempt to free the Greek states of Asia Minor from Persian control and, therefore, reduce the extent of the Persian realm. Their victory would be remembered not only by the Greeks but also by the Macedonians, who had been drawn into the attempted westward Persian expansion.

While these losses did not collapse the bonds of empire, or deplete the treasury, they demonstrated that ongoing expansion so distant from the heart of the empire was unwise. Babylon again rose in revolt and military reinforcements were set in place in Asia Minor in the 470s. More widespread uprisings began in the next decade, although Xerxes did not live to confront them. His death, however, demonstrates two other serious faults in the structure of the Persian state. He was murdered by the important noble official Artabanos with the assistance of the eunuch of the bedside; Artabanos' goal, though not fulfilled, seems to have been to become king in his own right. There were other candidates in the persons of Xerxes' three legitimate sons: Dareios, Hystaspes, and Artaxerxes in order of their age. It was customary for the eldest son of the king to succeed, but in this case Artaxerxes murdered Dareios. Artabanos then attempted to kill Artaxerxes, but was himself murdered. Artaxerxes took the throne, but became secure only after he met the challenge of his surviving brother Hystaspes, who marched with troops from his satrapy in Bactria to contest the throne, only to be killed in battle. To anticipate, the murder of a reigning king and the struggle among would-be successors would come to mark much of the remaining history of the Achaemenid dynasty. It hardly needs mentioning that insecurity at the pinnacle of absolute power disrupts the entire structure of control.

After his rough drive for power, Artaxerxes ruled for 40 years, from 465 to 424. Rather than expanding the empire, he was preoccupied with retaining the territory unified by his predecessors.

The pesky Greeks continued their attacks on Persia by sending a large expedition to Egypt to remove Persian control from that once-independent kingdom. Dispatched in 461, the force enjoyed some initial success and the Greeks were not defeated until 454. A treaty of peace was made between Persia and Athens five years later. In the meantime, Greeks were also active in stirring up problems in Asia Minor. To manage the unstable situation, Artaxerxes sent one of his sons, Kyros, with the rank of *karanos*, or superior commander, to the region. In addition, one Megabyzos revolted in Syria with the aid of Greek mercenaries, and there seem to have been hostilities in Judah. Other problems surfaced on the periphery of the empire; there was trouble in Bactria, and in Cyprus the native king Evagoras, though nominally subservient to the Persian Great King, had ambitions of his own to add to the territory under his control.

A sign of deeper changes within the imperial structure is the surrender of his private name (perhaps Arshu) in exchange for the adoption of a throne name by the ruling Achaemenid. Artaxerxes means "power through the deity Arta." The development reveals a subtle change in the nature of kingship: while use of his personal name emphasizes the ability of a king to rule by his own qualities, adoption of a throne name stresses the inherited prestige of the position. Another reminder of kingly power was given by their images now found on Persian coins. Both developments suggest the further institutionalization of the Persian governance.

Artaxerxes I died a natural death, something few of his successors would experience. In fact, his legitimate son and successor, Xerxes, was murdered after a 45-day reign by one of the illegitimate sons of Artaxerxes, Sogdianos. Another of Artaxerxes' illegitimate sons, Okhos, raised an army in his Caspian satrapy and was joined in his contest for the throne by the satrap of Egypt. Yet another serious problem was that the commander of the household cavalry for Sogdianos had made the mistake of alienating the palace troops. Sogdianos surrendered and was allowed to live for some six months before being put to death. Okhos became king, taking the throne name of Dareios II. His reign to 404 was not peaceful. After

facing the revolt of his full brother, Arsites, he contended with rebellions in Media and Anatolia and by a group of people, the Kadousioi, living south of the Caspian. Equally problematic was the involvement of Persia in Greek affairs: a vacillating policy of support for Sparta and its allies and then for Athens was costly in financial expense as well as in prompting different policies among the satraps most concerned with Greece, namely those of Anatolia.

On his death – a natural end, it seems – Dareios II was succeeded in 405 or 404 by his elder son Arses, who took the throne name of Artaxerxes II. Early in his reign, the new king had to deal with his brother Kyros, who was attempting to unseat him. In exercising the military role in Anatolia assigned to him by his father, Kyros had raised a large force, which he now directed against his brother. As we know from one of the participants, the Athenian Xenophon, who describes the expedition in his famous *Anabasis*, some 13,000 of that army were Greek mercenaries who from 401 marched westward through the empire to do battle with Artaxerxes' force at Cunaxa, north of Babylon. The outcome was decided by the death of Kyros, allowing Artaxerxes to rule until 359. Those decades were marred with revolts and rebellion. Egypt, which had been independent for sixty years until it had been returned to at least partial Persian control between 404 and 400, revolted. Some fifteen years elapsed before a Persian force was assembled to regain control; that effort failed. The Achaemenid king was occupied elsewhere. Unrest occurred in many parts of Asia Minor due both to internal dissatisfaction and to the military activity of Sparta in the region. The Greek king Evagoras of Cyprus was also extending his activity, taking Tyre in Phoenicia, an event that fostered revolt in southern Anatolia. What is known as the King's Peace of 386 can be seen in light of controlling the Greek interference in Persian territory, by declaring that the cities in Asia as well as the islands of Clazomenai and Cyprus belonged to the Great King and that all larger associations of Greek states should be ended. This Peace was not successful: in the 360s many of the western satraps were in revolt against the king, a condition that continued into the 350s.

Even relations within his own family were conflicted: his eldest son, the crown prince, was executed after conspiring against him; another legitimate son committed suicide; a favored illegitimate son was murdered. His surviving legitimate son, Okhos, succeeded to the throne as Artaxerxes III. Testimony from a writer of the first century CE suggests that he was concerned about his own ability to survive threats from family members: to prevent at least some of the attempts, he buried alive the woman who was both his stepmother and his sister, and had his uncle and more than one hundred of his own sons and grandsons locked in a courtyard where they were killed by volleys of arrows.

Thus he lived to rule for 21 years, during which his major success was retaking Egypt in 342. To manage the situation in Anatolia, he ordered the western satraps to disband the private armies that they had raised. That some centralized control was re-established is demonstrated by the decision of the satrap of Phrygia, Artabazos, to seek refuge for himself and his family beyond the reach of Artaxerxes, namely at the court of Philip II in Pella. Revolt in Cyprus was smothered without great difficulty. His commanders even managed to end the revolt of the Kadousioi that had been raging since the reign of Dareios II.

The end of Artaxerxes III was similar to that of most of his predecessors as well as that of his successor, Artaxerxes IV. He was murdered in 338 by his own sons with the assistance of one of his most influential officials, the eunuch Bagoas. After ruling for two years, Artaxerxes IV and his sons were purged, again on the plotting of Bagoas. Few successors remained alive. The most eligible candidate was one of the commanders of the campaign against the Kadousioi, a cousin of the king, who had been made satrap in Armenia. Thus he was out of harm's way during the purge and when invited to assume the kingship, first forced Bagoas to consume the liquid of a poisoned cup intended for his own consumption.

Thus, Kodomannos became the last of the Achaemenid line in 336 under the throne name of Dareios III. By that year, Philip of Macedon had formed the League of Corinth and announced the

League's declaration of war against Persia. In fact, he had begun to establish forward bases before he was assassinated in 336, leaving the Macedonian kingship to Alexander III. Dareios would thus have little time to set his empire in order before dealing with the Macedonians on Persian soil.

Comparison of the Persian Empire with the Macedonian Kingdom

Most of our information about the Persian Empire comes from Greek sources, and the nature of relations between Persians and Greeks generally imbues those sources with a less than complimentary tone. There are exceptions, to be sure: Xenophon's *Cyropaideia*, or *The Education of Kyros*, has positive comments on many features of Persian life. But even Xenophon speaks of the faithlessness of Persians (*Hellenika* IV.1.32–3), a trait he witnessed at first hand as one of the Greek mercenaries hired by Kyros the younger in his bid to dethrone the king, who as we have seen happened to be his brother. Plato described the poor administration of the Persian Empire owing to the Persian excess of slavery and despotism (*Laws* III.694 ff), and Isokrates disparaged the "softness" of the Persians (*Panegyrikos* 138–49). Such views of one's enemies are not unique to the case of the Greeks and the Persians; we have seen that the usual depiction of Philip II in the Greek sources was unfavorable, to say the least.

In an attempt to move beyond such judgments to information that may shed more light on Alexander and his career, our attention is focused on the nature of the Persian Empire by the mid-fourth century as Philip was strengthening his Macedonian kingdom and, somewhat later, as Philip and soon Alexander advanced against the empire. How different were the two realms? How full was the knowledge of one another's territory and its organization? Great differences between the two realms may lead to an appreciation of the flexibility and adaptability of Philip and, even more, of

Alexander, who replaced the Achaemenid dynasty with his own rule. On the other hand, a large number of similarities may suggest an underlying rapport that a clever would-be conqueror could employ.

We begin with the physical nature of the realms, their size in terms both of territorial extent and of population. Related questions are how each realm was created and, once created, how it was governed. The merging of varieties of peoples within the two realms produces another question: were local customs of once-independent peoples retained and, if so, what were the political, cultural, and economic consequences of the retention? Inasmuch as the Macedonian kingdom and the Persian Empire were not static entities throughout their histories, it is necessary to inquire whether developments over time provoked internal difficulties.

The Persian Empire was the largest unified realm that the Near East had experienced in the 2,500 years of the growth of increasingly greater states. Approximate dimensions yield a breadth of some 2,500 miles (4,000 km) from western Anatolia to the Hindu Kush, and more than 1,000 miles (1,600 km) from the southern coast of the Black Sea to the northern coast of the Persian Gulf in the region of the Persian capital of Persepolis and Pasargadai. Although population estimates are difficult to calculate, numbers for the Persian Empire were in the millions. Egypt alone in the period after Alexander's death supported a population of seven to eight million. Individual cities, such as Babylon, grew to 50,000 or more. These peoples were extraordinarily diverse in terms of both ethnicity and way of life. At the core were the Indo-European Persians themselves, whose tribal groups had only recently unified. Unification allowed the extension of control over long-established peoples of Mesopotamia, the Levant, Anatolia, and Egypt in the west; tribal peoples of Arabia in the south; mountain dwellers in central Asia; and, at least through alliance, inhabitants of western India. The political organization of the conquered ranged from personal control by a tribal chieftain to deeply entrenched administrative structures. Just as diverse were the economic structures of the individual elements of the empire: nomads co-existed with highly specialized and

carefully managed economies. Many languages, beliefs, and material cultures were concrete demonstrations of the differences of the empire's inhabitants.

While the territorial size that Macedon achieved during the reign of Philip II paled by comparison with that of Persia, growth over time had vastly enlarged its extent: its physical dimensions had more than tripled since the reign of Alexander I, under whom the size had already grown extensively. The kingdom's more than 16,600 square miles (43,000 km^2) reached from the Adriatic to the western coast of the Black Sea and southward from the Balkans through the mainland of Greece. The population was not as large as that of the Persian Empire, yet an estimate suggests nearly a million inhabitants through the whole of the territory under Philip's effective control by 336, also a tripling since the end of the fifth century. Viewed in comparison with the size of states in the western Aegean, Macedon was gigantic. The diversity of its population was also notable: although most of the peoples drawn together by Philip were Indo-Europeans, their languages and cultures varied widely. Greeks had lived a polis way of life for centuries; the Illyrians and the Thracians retained a tribal existence; and the inhabitants of lower Macedonia were witnessing the creation of the administrative structure of a growing kingdom.

The physical extent of both realms produced problems of communication. We have noted that the further expansion of Dareios I and his son Xerxes I was repulsed by the tiny poleis of the Greek mainland. The regions most distant from the Persian capitals were often in rebellion from the reign of Artaxerxes (465–424): Greek Asia Minor was a source of constant concern as Greeks from the mainland sought to free it from Persian shackles. Egypt, too, was difficult to control: after becoming independent before the end of the fifth century, it remained free until 343. It might have been retaken earlier when the Persians won control of one of the mouths of the Nile in the late fifth century, which put them in a position to take the capital of Memphis by surprise. By the time the commander had referred the plan to the king for approval, the

defenders had gained the upper hand. More inaccessible areas throughout the empire were hot-spots throughout much of the Achaemenid period, but increasingly revolts occurred closer to the Persian capitals. Media was in revolt during the last years of Dareios II. Even the satraps, whose positions were due to the king, could amass large armies and, thus, independence from royal control. Some of this freedom was exhibited in the rivalry between the satraps of larger regions. During the 360s, on the other hand, all the western satraps were in revolt against Dareios II.

And as the Macedonian kingdom expanded, it was impossible for the king to personally command armies in all areas of unrest. Thus he had to rely on his subordinates. It required time, for example, for reports to reach Philip from Parmenion, who had been designated to command the contingent of 10,000 troops sent to Asia Minor by Philip. Philip's own actions depended on the success or failure of troops under the command of others.

The two realms were alike in their creation through military means, which has been summarized in this chapter for Persia and in chapter 5 for Macedon. Gaining a secure independent existence was the motive for both the early Achaemenid and Argead rulers. Persia had been subservient to Media before the reign of Kyros, while the small kingdom of Macedon was threatened on all sides by stronger powers. Although the Persian expansion was more rapid and far more extensive, the maintenance of the unified empire demanded ongoing military strength and the regular exercise of that strength. Macedonian unity over wider territory ebbed and flowed with the continual threats from Illyrians, Thracians, Greeks, and, as we have seen at the end of the sixth century, Persians, thus requiring a similar military readiness.

In addition to force of arms, unity was strengthened by diplomacy and the creation of an efficient central administration by both dynasties. Alliances, trade agreements, negotiations carried on through envoys all were tools of governance, as was the implementation of means to lessen the power of potential rivals within the realms. Achaemenid kings faced threats from other Persian

aristocratic families as well as revolts on the part of rulers of once-independent states. The practice of assigning important positions, such as that of satrap, to the Persian aristocracy was a tool for mitigating unrest from that quarter, just as settling hopefully loyal Persian officials in military and civil positions in all regions of the kingdoms was a response to the danger of separatism in whole portions of the empire. Non-Persians were also invited to serve in important roles. Equally dangerous was the power of the Macedonian aristocracy, not only that of branches of the Argead line but also of the noble families of upper Macedonia, as the spotty career of Philip's father shows so clearly. The fashioning of a structure that would enlist the aid of these potential rivals was often successful, while the creation of the scheme of the king's boys – as we have seen, sons of aristocratic families who entered career training in Pella at the age of 13 or 14 – was an equally powerful incentive for good behavior on the part of their fathers. Drawing on non-Macedonians for vital positions was another answer.

In both realms, a balance was sought between the culture of the conquerors and the local cultures of the conquered. Achaemenids and Argeads alike had much to gain from long-established institutions throughout their territories: Philip II was adept at inserting himself into inherited positions such as those of *tagos* of Thessaly, member of the Amphiktyonic Council, *hegemon* of the League of Corinth. The incorporation of tested administrative systems, as those of Egypt and Mesopotamia, facilitated the creation of the initially rather simple framework of the Persians. Acceptance of various beliefs, languages, and traditions not only created a cultural *koine* but also softened the status of conquest. People transplanted by the Assyrians, for example the Israelites, were allowed to return to their original homeland, where they might rebuild their temple and practice the religion that identified them. For Macedonians, acceptance of the skills and culture of conquered groups enriched, but did not replace, their own culture and, at the same time, lessened the enmity of many, but certainly not all, of those brought under control from Pella.

While tolerant of local systems, the creation of a centralized structure of governance was the primary concern for many obvious reasons. On the one hand, the state provided the kings of both realms with a considerable advantage over potential rivals with respect to resources, financial as well as personnel, and to their personal power. Although certain features of Achaemenid administration are unclear, its main characteristics reveal the structuring of authority from the absolute power of the king, to satrapal authority, to special functionaries in treasuries and archives throughout the empire. Physically too the parts of the empire were connected through roads, coins, ceremonial centers, displays of royal decrees. We have argued, somewhat against the general view, that the Argeads were advancing centralized control in much the same fashion, albeit to a lesser extent than the Persian situation demonstrates. It is important to remember that much of the Macedonian development was accomplished by Philip, whereas the Persian structure had been evolving from the mid-sixth century. Macedonian archives no longer exist, although evidence of treaties with other states has been preserved. A measure of royal resources is shown in the treasures discovered at Vergina, while the remains at Pella reveal an impressive combination of administrative facilities and royal residence. As early as the reign of Archelaos, the Argeads knew the value of a network of roads. Philip pressed on with such construction and used the devices of his coins to illustrate the nature of his rule.

But the true center of each kingdom was its king. The Achaemenid ruler was known as "king of the countries," and although the Argeads did not receive this title, Philip and his son Alexander surely deserved it. Philip was Argead king of Macedon, *tagos* of Thessaly, *hegemon* of the League of Corinth, ally by treaty and marriage with the Molossians of Epiros. Alexander was all of the above and a great deal more by the time of his death in 323. The kings of both realms were not hampered by powerful assemblies or councils, even though the Macedonian army assembly had certain defined rights, and though both Achaemenid and Argead rulers consulted with their important subordinates. What is more,

the vastness of the kingdoms further impeded the royal exercise of power. As mentioned above, delay in securing the king's approval for a plan to capture the capital of Egypt caused the effort of the Persian troops at the end of the fifth century to fail. Philip's own actions in 356 would depend upon news of Parmenion's success or failure in dealing with new threats by the Illyrians. Thus neither ruler was truly absolute in the exercise of power. On the other hand, their power was far less fettered than that of leaders in the Greek states.

A second result of centralization was economic: the wealth at the kings' disposal was immense. In quantity, richness, and elegance, the Macedonian grave goods attest the nature of resources in the control of the later Argeads. Land conquered by the king's army held the status of royal land that could be allocated to subordinates or worked on lease by tenants. In addition to revenues from the land, Macedonian kings seem to have had control of timber and mineral resources – coinage was a royal prerogative. Taxes were levied on the use of harbors. Persian royal wealth derived from similar, although more extensive, sources: rents, taxes, services, goods, animals, the produce of the land, as well as certain monopolies such as coinage. Arrian reports (III.16.7) that Alexander, on entering Susa after defeating Dareios and his army at Gaugamela, discovered 50,000 talents of silver along with the other royal apparatus.

In sum, the nature of Macedon in the reign of Philip and Alexander shared many characteristics with the more mature Persian Empire. Furthermore, the origins of the royal lineages show rather striking similarities. The Persians were relative newcomers to the Near East, moving into the territory east of the Tigris in the mid-second millennium. The Indo-European migrants gradually formed small kingdoms ruled by chieftains, and nomadism was replaced by settled agriculture and herding. Nearly a millennium passed before pressure from more unified neighbors prompted growing centralization among the individual groups. Herodotos' account of the succession of Dareios I, while fanciful in several respects, conveys the nature of early Persian rule in describing a contest between the

leaders of seven major clans for the Achaemenid throne. (III.82–6). Continuing rivalry with the king from Persian aristocrats marks the subsequent history of the empire. Moreover, the family of Achaemenes itself proliferated, forming many branches. The report that Artaxerxes III protected himself by killing more than a hundred rivals of Achaemenid lineage indicates the seriousness of the proliferation.

The Macedonians, too, had only recently arrived in the territory that would become the core of the kingdom. Moving eastward from the Pindos mountains, Makednian peoples settled along the strip of land hugging the Thermaic Gulf toward the end of the eighth century. They were led by the chieftain of a clan known as the Argeadai. Like the Persians, the newcomers cohabited with existing peoples, establishing an agrarian way of life. As we have noted, similar circumstances of rule by clan chiefs prevailed amongst other groups in upper Macedonia as well as in further-distant regions. Well into the reigns of Philip II and Alexander, the power of many of these once-independent rulers was feared, and rightly so. Also comparable to the Persian case is the branching of the Argead line itself. Philip had rivals not only in three stepbrothers but also in Amyntas, who was the son of his brother King Perdikkas III, whose death in battle with the Illyrians emptied the throne; and in two pretenders. The pretenders were defeated and disappear from the records, the stepbrothers took refuge outside of Macedon, but Amyntas was allowed to live into the reign of Alexander. That king, however, found evidence that Amyntas' death might prolong his own life.

Despite the potential threat of other aristocratic families and other branches of the royal clan, the control of enlarging realms committed Achaemenid and Argead rulers to reliance on assistance from these powerful and wealthy families as subordinate officials in civil as well as military positions. A mark of the importance of such support is found in the oath (*bandaka* in Old Persian) exchanged between the individual clan headsmen and their king, intended to establish and preserve trust between both parties. A similar bond

existed among the Macedonians, for the Argead king also had to rely on the heads of other important lineages for his officials. The nature of the relationship is one of comradeship: the king's men were his companions, or *hetairoi*. A festival known as "Hetairideia" in honor of Zeus may have very early roots. In the fifth century, the comrades in arms appear to have been limited to families whose affluence allowed them to provide elite cavalry to the collective military force. By the time of Philip, foot companions were equally important both to the army and as a buttress to royal power. Persian and Macedonian kings also created trusted subordinates who were not Persian or Macedonian by birth. Not only would the practice provide more officials but it would also reduce complete reliance on native noble families.

Means of limiting the power of the aristocracy were developed by Argeads and Achaemenids alike: the introduction of foreigners into important positions, the education of noble youth at the king's court, obligations to be present at functions held in the royal centers, the possibility of being called to account for betrayal of the pledge or inherent bond of comradeship – all diminished the power of subordinates. Yet, even when diminished, the potential for serious harm to the royal line was ever present, be it in satrapal revolt against central authority or in threats to the life of the king himself. In a way akin to a difficult personal relationship, the king could not live happily with his near peers, nor could he manage without them.

One consequence of this situation was a growing institutionalization of central power. In the case of Persia, increasing consolidation together with contact with the more structured states of the ancient Near East had produced a degree of centralization by the mid-sixth century. The rapid expansion of Persian control required the initial reversal of vassalage to the Medes. The tradition that Kyros' mother was a daughter of the Median king may explain the role of Kyros himself in gaining the independence of the Persians. His own success in battle, on the other hand, was likely to have strengthened the claim to rule of subsequent members of the

Achaemenid line, thus making appropriate the definition of "heerkonigtum" or "war-kingship" for the early Persian organization. It fell to Dareios I to expand the structure of governance inherited from Kyros and Kambyses, as described earlier in this chapter. Sophisticated mechanisms of rule inherited from once-independent kingdoms in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Anatolia were useful models for management of the now vast empire. Another symbol of the increasing institutional character of Persian rule is the adoption of a throne name by Xerxes' successor, who took the name Artaxerxes and began the display of images of the king on coins of the realm. Both practices would be followed through the last of the Achaemenids.

Overpoweringly impressive displays of the power of the royal line were its physical insignia: palaces, tombs, roads, images, and inscriptions. The displays accompanied the kings even on campaign. After the defeat of the Persians at Plataia, Herodotos reports the treasures from the Persian camp: "Tents full of gold and silver furniture; couches overlaid with the same precious metals; bowls, goblets, and cups, all of gold; and wagons loaded with sacks full of gold and silver basins . . . not to mention richly embroidered clothes which, among so much of greater value, seemed of no account" (IX.80). The numbers of personnel employed in royal centers were also stunning tokens: a list of kitchen and banquet attendants in the train of Dareios III totals 795 (Athenaeus XI.781f–782). This reckoning was found at Damascos, where the king left these attendants as well as women and children traveling with the army as he hurried back to the center of his realm after the Persian defeat at Issos.

The account of the host and paraphernalia accompanying the Persian kings reflects another change from the sixth-century origins of the kingdom. Personal fitness and success in military command declined as the administrative structure increased. Kyros had created the vast kingdom through personal leadership; Dareios I campaigned in person although he also delegated military authority to others, a practice that became more frequent over time; and Herodotos gives credit to Xerxes for decisions made in the Persian attack upon

the Greek mainland but at Thermophylai the Great King issued orders to his contingents without taking part himself, and he watched the naval battle off Salamis from a location across the strait from the island. Thereafter no Persian king commanded in the field until the reign of Dareios II. And while Dareios III commanded the contests with the Macedonians at Issos and Gaugamela, he had delegated authority to satraps in the first encounter with Alexander.

Not as dramatic a development occurred in Macedon, although kingship was gaining a new character from its original "heerkonigtum." In fact, as we have noted, the king was acclaimed by the army assembly. Other organs of governance were minimal. A council of advisors seems to have been called by the king at his pleasure or need. Contact with neighboring peoples provoked internal political developments. As suggested in chapter 2, the success of the Greek hoplite infantry against the Persians in the early decades of the fifth century could well have spurred Alexander I to expand the Macedonian infantry, a step that enhanced his power vis-à-vis that of the other noble families. It also expanded the size of the Macedonian state, which in turn produced the need for means of control of the new territory. Dealing with states eager to procure Macedonian timber showed the value of beneficial treaty-making. And to restrain outsiders who sought to take resources rather than trade for them, fortresses on the boundaries, roads connecting parts of the core, and the concentration of functions at a center were implemented, particularly by Archelaos in the late fifth century. While the first four decades of the fourth century weakened the developments of the fifth, Philip reinstituted all of the earlier measures and added more of his own. Pella was a royal residence on a hill overlooking bureaus of governance surrounding a large agora, with locations for archives, control of coinage, design of weapons, training grounds for the king's boys, private residences with remains indicating that they are not the homes of lower-class workers, and sanctuaries. Following in the steps of his predecessors, Philip had his own image imprinted on the Macedonian coins: *l'état c'est moi*!

A major point of difference between the two kings is that despite the increasing regularization of administration, the Macedonian kings continued to lead their troops in battle.

The continuity of the royal line was buttressed by marriage alliances. Until the reign of Dareios II, the marriages of the king and his sons tended to be endogamous, that is, within the lineage. Dareios I had six wives, two of whom were daughters of Kyros and one the daughter of Kyros' son Bardiya. Dareios I also took as wives the daughters of two major aristocratic families in the daughters of Gobyras and Otanes, the latter having been the wife of both Kambyses and Bardiya.

Evidence gives Amyntas III, the father of Philip, two wives: Eurydike, the mother of Philip, had Illyrian and Lynkestian ancestry while Gygaia was of the Argead line. The choices reveal the twin motives of maintaining the royal lineage but also forging alliances with other independent – and thus likely dangerous – kingdoms. The seven marriages of Philip II illustrate the same motives, although the expansion of the kingdom produced six unions with non-Argeads and only one Argead, interestingly Philip's last marriage. His other wives were from Thessaly (two daughters of important families), Illyria, Elimeia, Epiros, and Thrace. Alexander III had only three wives: Roxane, the daughter of a Bactrian lord, and two daughters of Dareios III.

While marriage ties strengthened the control of power in one line, enabling wider bonds with other important families both within and beyond the borders of the realm, the king's religious role added prestige to his relations with more numerous non-aristocratic elements of the kingdom. Dareios I announced his debt to Ahura-Mazda plainly in the Behistun inscription carved on the face of a mountain along the road leading to Ecbatana from Babylon: Dareios stands in front of bound captives; behind him stand two figures, one holding a bow, the other a spear. Above the captives is a figure fastened to a winged disk and holding a ring in his left hand. The image of Dareios extends its right hand toward the figure and the ring: the inscription asserts that Dareios is king through the favor

of Ahura-Mazda, the force of truth in Zoroastrian religion, who protects and empowers the Persian king, who, in turn, rules to ensure that truth will prevail throughout his kingdom. Imperial festivals and the construction of temples were royal prerogatives, extending to permission for and funding of temples of religions other than Zoroastrianism.

Although the deities, festivals, and religious structures differ in kind, they are similar in defining the role of Macedonian kings. Zeus and Herakles were the most important figures for the Argead kings. Herakles was the progenitor of the clan; Zeus was Herakles' father as well as the father of Makedon, eponymous ancestor of the Macedonians themselves. The Macedonian towns of Dion and Herakleion on the main route southward into Thessaly, and the use on coins of images of both figures, are indicative of the role of that ancestry. Cult centers to Zeus were located at Dion and the original capital at Aigai, where Archelaos established a festival in honor of the "greatest god," while Herakles was honored at Aigai and Pella. The kings exercised special responsibilities in these and other festivals. Mosaics at Pella reveal the importance of Dionysos, something that is to be expected given the importance of wine in the Macedonian symposia. There is no inscription similar to that carved at Behistun to state that Zeus gave the kingship to the Argeads. Nonetheless, this aspect of Macedonian kingship is clearly visible without such an inscription.

Physical evidence also confirms the power and wealth of Achaemenids and Argeads. Persian centers at Susa and Persepolis were overpowering in dimensions and expenditure of labor. The city of Susa was built on a sloping founding of unbaked brick between 33 and 40 feet (10 and 12 m) high. A person passing through the Dareios gate into the palace would walk through the central one of three halls for more than 68 feet (21 m) and, if looking upward, his gaze would rise to 40 or 43 feet (12 or 13 m). The platform on which the palaces rested stretched over nearly 30 acres (12 hectares or 120,000 m^2). At Persepolis the terrace was even larger, some 31 acres (125,000 m^2). Pella was not of similar

dimensions, although by comparison with other centers in Macedonia and Greece it was immediately impressive. The agora covered 17 acres (7 hectares or 70,000 m^2) and the palace 15 acres (6 hectares or 60,000 m^2). Structures surrounding the agora enlarged the sweep of the city and surely the 2,300 feet (700 m) of territory separating the palace from the city core was more than no-man's-land. Pella's Hippodamian plan reveals a deliberate process of construction akin to that of the Achaemenid rulers.

These capital cities were centers of administration overseen by the kings to which foreign envoys, guests, and refugees from elsewhere traveled to deal with the king. Roads were planned and constructed in accord with royal directives; treasuries maintained to hold the royal wealth were managed by royal officials; ceremonial locations were established by royal command or permission, and many of them were dedicated to events in which the kings played the major roles. In sum, although the kings of Persia and Macedon were aware of persistent threats to their power, they enjoyed a status that set them apart from their subjects, even subjects of aristocratic status.

Knowledge of one Another

The realms of the Achaemenids and the Argeads show a number of similarities, if on different scales. It remains to inquire as to their actual knowledge of one another before the campaigns of Alexander III.

In the sixth century and the early fifth, contact initiated by Persia was direct, too direct for the Macedonian way of thinking: Persian expansion took its army into the northern Aegean and westward to the borders of the small state of Macedon. If not control, Dareios I may have effected a relationship of vassal to lord. When Xerxes renewed his father's campaign against Greece, Macedon was his staging ground and its king, Alexander I, joined the train of the Persian force. The surprising success of Greek hoplites and rowers

removed the direct link between Persia and Macedon essentially until the reign of Philip II, whose own expansion extended the borders of his realm eastward through Thrace so that the two kingdoms became neighbors across the Propontis and the Black Sea. In fact, there are grounds for believing that Philip was establishing a foothold in northwestern Asia Minor in the 340s through an affiliation with Hermias, who had managed to achieve independence from Persia for his small kingdom of Atarneos. First-hand knowledge of Persian affairs reached the later Argeads through Persian officials who determined that their lives would be more secure in Macedon.

The case of Artabazos is especially enlightening for our investigation of Alexander's world. The first known Artabazos was a commander in Xerxes' Greek expedition in 480–479; his high command was due, in part, to his lineage: he may well have been the son of a brother of the brother of Dareios. He remained in Greece for a time after Xerxes had returned to Persia following the defeat at Salamis, and on his return, he was rewarded with the satrapy of Daskyleion (Assyria), which Herodotos describes as "by far the most coveted of all their provincial posts." Its satrap "received an *artaba* (about five bushels) of silver every day" (I.192). The satrapy remained the preserve of his descendants for 90 years. The great-grandson of this first Artabazos bore the same name, but unlike his ancestor he became embroiled in the struggles of the western satraps against the king in the 360s. Finding himself in a precarious position, he determined to leave. His marriage to a Greek woman whose brothers were powerful mercenary captains pointed to exile in the west: Artabazos with his family – including one of his brothers-in-law – went into exile in Macedon, where they were the guest-friends of King Philip. The stay lasted about a decade until one of Artabazos' Greek brothers-in-law, whose services to Persia were significant, persuaded King Artaxerxes II to recall Artabazos and his family. During those 10 years, however, there was opportunity for Philip to learn a great deal about the situation in Persia and for members of Artabazos' family to become well acquainted with the life and people at Pella. One

of Artabazos' daughters, Barsine, a near contemporary of Alexander, quite surely knew Alexander in those years. After the family's return to Persia, several members were captured by the Macedonians in 332 or 331. The captives were not executed and, in fact, a new relationship between Barsine and Alexander began. A son of that bond, Herakles, was born about 327.

More information could have been learned through another Persian official, the Parthian Amminapes, who traveled to Pella when he was exiled by Artaxerxes III. He also returned, to join his superior, Mazakes, satrap of Egypt, in surrendering to Alexander III in 332.

In addition to direct contacts, much was gained through Greeks whose contacts with Persia had been ongoing following the Persian Wars of 480–479. Persian aristocrats sought refuge in Greek states as well as in Macedon, and prominent Greeks transplanted themselves to Persia. Ktesias, from the island of Knidos, who was physician to Artaxerxes II, also employed himself in writing the *Persika* in 23 books. Although it survives only in limited fragments today, it could have been known to contemporaries of the author, Macedonians as well as Greeks. Xenophon of Athens was one of the Greek mercenaries who took service with Kyros the younger, who sought to take the throne from his brother, Artaxerxes II. Xenophon reported on that expedition in his *Anabasis* and *Hellenica*, providing details concerning the western region of the Persian Empire. Earlier accounts of Greek and Persian interaction existed in the *Histories* of Herodotos and the *History of the Peloponnesian War* of Thukydides. The celebrated Athenian leaders Themistokles and Alkibiades were indebted to the Persians: Themistokles, a hero of the Greek defeat of Xerxes' campaign, finished life as a Persian official in Asia Minor while Alkibiades, in his vaccilation in and out of favor in Athens, met his end in Asia Minor, where he had taken refuge with a major Persian official.

By the reign of Philip, those interactions were hostile, as the incessant fighting amongst the major poleis allowed Persia to reassert its power in the Aegean sphere. In 387–386, Artaxerxes II imposed

an agreement on the Greek states known as the King's Peace, described earlier in this chapter as the Persian claim to control both Greek territories and affairs. Those terms were reaffirmed 15 years later. Such conditions unsurprisingly brought protests and calls for change from Greece. The Athenian Isokrates argued in his *Panegyrikos* that no enduring peace could exist among the Greeks until they agreed to make war against the barbarians of Asia. He further understood that joint action depended on a powerful individual, not a Greek polis. Thus, his address to Philip c. 345 encouraged that king to carry out both efforts: namely, uniting Greece and leading an army into barbarian Persia.

This chapter began with the question of why Alexander looked eastward rather than to the west as his Epirote relatives did. One answer is that Persia was familiar through direct and indirect knowledge of its organization, through the western regions of the empire, and through some important officials who certainly shared their reasons for seeking refuge at Pella and surely offered other information. Such information would reveal the existence of vast "Lebensraum" and wealth in the east. A second answer is that the two realms were similar – not identical of course – in their origin, nature of political governance, and problems. Greeks of the mainland and of Asia Minor wanted to be rid of the Persian menace, but by the mid-fourth century were unable to accomplish that result for themselves. A good pretext for a Macedonian ruler was at hand in Greek sources: before long, Philip had accomplished the first task urged by Isokrates and could undertake the second.

Achaemenid kings

Kyros	559–530
Kambyses	530–522
Dareios I	522–486
Xerxes I	486–465
Artaxerxes I	465–424
Xerxes II	424

Sogdianos	424–423
Dareios II	423–405
Artaxerxes II	405–359
Artaxerxes III	359–338
Artaxerxes IV	338–336
Dareios III	336–330
Alexander III	330–323

7
Reconstructing Alexander

The first chapter of our attempt to learn more about Alexander III of Macedon offered a sketch of his career that has emerged from patient examination and reconciliation of the problematic sources. The sketch avoided the many uncertain details and debated issues, such as the date for the destruction of Persepolis and Alexander's motivation in burning the site. Even more hotly debated is the personality of the person who affected the lives of millions of people throughout much of the then known world and, eventually, far beyond that extent. In the introduction, we quoted Will Cuppy's amusing but sensible answer to efforts at learning Alexander's motivation: not only could Cuppy not provide an explanation but he proposed that Alexander himself would have difficulty in giving an answer. Claude Mossé, noted historian of the ancient world, came to a similar conclusion in her recent biography of Alexander with the observation that he "will always remain a stranger to us" (p. 211); she specifically cautioned the need to omit speculation on the psychological dimension of Alexander.

As we noted at the beginning of this present venture into Alexandrology, the nature of the surviving evidence is largely to blame. How regrettable, for example, is the loss of the four books of letters from Aristotle to Alexander, or the single book of letters from that philosopher to Hephaistion. And, if Arrian's account can be trusted

on the matter, Alexander also wrote letters, for example to his mother while the Macedonians were in India (VI.1.3) and in answer to the offer of Dareios following the Persian defeat at Issos (II.14.4 ff). Nothing comparable to the personal insights that letters would provide exists. Even the best of the surviving sources reflect the problems faced by their authors. Arrian states that numerous false accounts exist and are likely to be perpetuated; to counter them is the aim of his own history (VI.11.2). In his attempt to present a true account Arrian confesses that certain details are of no concern to him (V.20.2), and he admits that he cannot contribute an understanding of Alexander's thoughts, nor is it appropriate for him to infer them (VII.1.4).

Other doors to the nature of this hero do exist. We have examined five of those doors in the belief that much can be learned about Alexander III of Macedon through the interplay between this captivating but mysterious individual and his world. To be sure, Alexander shaped the course of history by his own actions. At the same time, the nature of the world into which he was born shaped him to pursue his whirlwind career. He had to learn to cope with his world, employing strategies that were likely to succeed. The doors that offer the fullest clues to the individual are his kingdom and its people; his status as a member of the Argead line and his parentage; Macedonian vulnerability to its neighbors, which demanded a standing, resolute military; the relationship between Macedon and Greece; and the nature of the Persian Empire in the fourth century.

Youth

The year 356 was a relatively good one in which to be born by comparison with the previous four decades of Macedonian history. Surprisingly, the fearsome Illyrians had not repeated their incursion of 360/59, which took the life of the Macedonian king and probably two-thirds of his soldiers. The anticipation of another attack

may in fact have strengthened the tenuous bonds between the core of the kingdom, along the Thermaic Gulf of the Aegean, and the several inland kingdoms that had a history of vacillating between inclusion in a single kingdom and independent existence. These western territories were even closer to the land of the Illyrians and could feel the force of an Illyrian push into Macedonia before the invaders reached their goal. Tighter cohesion between lower and upper Macedonia is demonstrated by the origins of men who were among Philip's, and later Alexander's, most reliable subordinates. Parmenion, who had strong ties with upper Macedonia, successfully commanded the Macedonian army against the Illyrians in 356 and remained Philip's loyal, effective general through the king's reign. He would enjoy similar status under Alexander for six years. The loyalty of Orestis is demonstrated by the high positions of Krateros and Perdikkas; that of Elimeia by Koinos; Alexander's friend Leonnatos was a member of the royal line of Lynkestis. On the other hand, the cohesion had only recently been re-established. Lynkestis, for example, had a long record of hostility to Macedonian control, and the head of the Lynkestian royal family during Philip's rule had three adult sons. It would have been a mistake to believe that attempts to regain independence would never recur.

In the aftermath of the Illyrian victory, the new Argead ruler, Philip II, had made a treaty with the Illyrian king and, in 358, a successful campaign against the Illyrians produced a diplomatic marriage between Philip and the daughter of the Illyrian king. The following year an alliance, again coupled with marriage, this time to the daughter of the king of Epiros, expanded the sphere of Macedonian influence to the west. Negotiations with neighbors to the north, south, and east were also increasing in the first years of Philip's reign: diplomacy and gifts mollified the Paionians and Thracians, marriage with the daughter of an important Thessalian family in Larisa introduced a Macedonian presence into northern Greece, and problematic Athens in southern Greece agreed to a treaty, while Greek states in the northern Aegean began to feel the pressure of the Macedonian army. A son born to the Macedonian king would

witness the ongoing expansion of Macedonian control as the realm doubled in size from its territorial base at the end of the fifth century.

Even when its core was much smaller, the region possessed a range of enviable natural resources: two great rivers and their tributaries with abundant fish; fair amounts of rainfall in the winter; accumulations of snow that provided water in the summer; fertile plains including a sizeable coastal plain suited to agriculture and pasturage; well-forested mountains that were home to a wide range of animals; rich supplies of minerals. Expansion not only protected existing people and resources but also added to them.

Effective use of natural and human resources was also expanding during Alexander's youth. The settlement at Pella, which had been enlarged during the reign of Archelaos in the last years of the fifth century, was expanded by Philip II to include facilities essential to centralized control of the kingdom. Although continuous habitation and new building at Pella obscure the picture of the capital of the kingdom during the reign of Philip, sufficient evidence survives to show that it was not a small town of rustic people. Rather there were domestic quarters for the king and his extensive family, quarters for the king's boys and visiting envoys, and necessary facilities for their care. Somewhat removed were the offices of governance: a secretariat and records, management of resources, units such as the development of military machinery. The earlier center at Aigai, which remained the kingdom's ceremonial focal point, had a theater as well as the grand royal tombs of earlier Argead men and women. Excavation of those tombs has demonstrated the splendor of items surely used in the palace as well as serving as dedications to the deceased. Moreover, more tombs are now being identified with such rapidity that excavation cannot keep pace with the discovery. Other settlements, when brought under Macedonian control, were often refounded as Macedonian cities; new colonies were established; forts on the ever-expanding borders were set in place; and efforts to connect the full sweep of the kingdom resulted in the construction of roads.

Thus, a young son of a king would be acquainted with an increasingly large, centralized, and diverse kingdom directed from a

capital in which he lived in the residential portion of the palace. If this youth were not disabled physically or mentally, he would receive the education appropriate to potential successors to the kingship. Central to this education would be the ability to rule directly in all matters essential to governance of the kingdom.

The physical character of Macedonia was an important force in creating a king who had to campaign through the year, enduring freezing winter temperatures, especially cold in the mountains, and summer heat surpassing 40° C (104° F). Inasmuch as river valleys and mountain passes could be points of enemy incursion, it was vital to know these natural features well. Maintaining security in upper, mountainous regions of the kingdom led to dangerous encounters with wild animals as well as with discontented subjects. The physical evidence of paintings and mosaics joins written sources to show the importance of hunting prowess among the Argeads: a "conspiracy" against Alexander in 330 involved one of the king's boys who had been beaten for besting Alexander in the slaying of a boar during a hunt. Familiarity with the rivers entailed the ability to cross them when necessary. A successful Macedonian king would be physically fit at birth, would not be impaired in his youth, and, through training, would perfect that fitness to the point where he was akin to the Homeric heroes in being like a god by comparison with most men.

As Macedon assumed new dimensions and greater complexity, other skills were needed to rule successfully. Expertise in matters of administration could be delegated to others who had the requisite skills, but departments such as a secretariat, an equipment design unit, and a bureau of coinage had to be staffed and supervised by fit personnel. And with territorial expansion came the need to divide the basic responsibility of military leadership: the king could not be in Thrace and central Greece at the same time, yet delay in responding to uprisings or incursions would be disastrous.

Moreover, the successful enlargement of the kingdom brought with it the need to treat with subjects and allies in ways intelligible to them. Most of Macedonia's neighbors were of Indo-European stock, but even that common heritage now carried real



Figure 7.1 Reconstruction of the Hunt Fresco in Tomb II at Vergina. Courtesy of Mrs Olympia Andronikou-Kakoulidou

differences of language and ways of life. Deeper knowledge of at least some of the cultural differences would enable a ruler to discover the proper relationship. People with bilingual ability were available, but it is not implausible to envision the growth of a common language, a *koine*, based on Indo-European similarities. Did Philip converse with his Elimeian, Illyrian, Epirote, Greek, Thracian wives through interpreters?

The immediate neighbor most advanced in intellectual accomplishments by the mid-fourth century was Greece. To reckon with the world of battling poleis as well as to position oneself in that world required knowledge of institutions, past history, and values. Speaking and reading Greek would be a key to all of the above. A man in the position of Philip was likely to appreciate the reality of dealing with the Greeks in language and ways that were familiar to them. Beyond his own perception, he would see the wisdom of preparing a potential heir to have the same understanding.

A highly qualified tutor for the young Alexander was found in Aristotle, who had lived at Pella in his own youth when his father was physician to the Argeads. Aristotle obviously could

communicate with Alexander and the other young men he tutored for more than two years, perhaps in the Macedonian tongue but surely also in the Greek tongue. Although the texts of two of Aristotle's works believed to have been written for the sake of Alexander do not survive, their titles are Greek, as the contents must also have been: *On Colonies* and *On Monarchy*. Subjects in which the young men were instructed have not been recorded, but Aristotle's wide interests in the sciences, literature, rhetoric, and philosophy were probably mirrored in the training. Arrian's account of Alexander mentions his fascination with other forms of philosophy – as, for example, the *gymnosophistai* (unclad wise men) of India (e.g. Arrian VII.1.4–2.1). Alexander's experts for the campaign in Asia included surveyors and those with special knowledge in zoology and biology. His fondness for literature is remembered not only in the copy of the *Iliad* prepared by Aristotle that the king carried with him to Asia, but also in the literary contests that were regular events throughout the long campaign (Arrian II.5.8, in Anatolia; VII.14.1, on the return to Ecbatana). And while we cannot trust the accuracy of the speeches attributed to Alexander by Arrian, his power of speech is plain in the persuasion needed to rouse his men for battle, for taking an impregnable fortress or crossing an unknown river in the dark of night, or for enduring a march across the Hindu Kush or the Gedrosian Desert.

In sum, training of several types began at an early age for a king's son who was deemed healthy and of sound mind. Some of that training was indirect: acclimatization to the Macedonian environment, experiencing life in the palace and the lower city of Pella, watching one's father and his companions as well as members of delegations from other kingdoms or states. Much of the education was formal, through tutors and, most likely, in the same physical regime in which the king's boys were trained. In one's second decade, carrying out the assignments of the king was incorporated into the training: Alexander acted as regent when he was 16 and he commanded the right wing at Chaironeia when he was 18.

Watching Philip was important, for, as we have seen, he created the base from which Alexander was to move against Persia only two years after succeeding his father. That base was a large kingdom under the rule of one powerful king. A standing army, based on the Greek phalanx but reformed in equipment, tactics, and personnel, was the tool that forged the kingdom. Administrative equipment for governance was developed or expanded by Philip, as was the recruitment of future officers through the training of sons of the aristocracy as king's boys. Rewards for a military career drew men not only from Macedonia but also from the regions more recently incorporated into the kingdom. As his reach stretched into the Propontis, Philip undertook the construction of a fleet. In 334, for his crossing into Anatolia, Alexander had a fleet of 160 triremes and many merchant ships (Arrian I.11.6).

Philip had acquired solid knowledge of his neighbors and was able to insert himself into the established structure of those whom he and his men had defeated. He was an ally of some of those neighbors, related to several ruling families by marriage into them, an official in certain states particularly in Greece, such as *tagos* of the Thessalians, convener and leader of a League. He wore many "hats" in addition to the Macedonian *petasos*. And yet he remained the active agent in all aspects of rule: military, religious, administrative spheres all converged on the Argead ruler. An attentive son, as his own age and wisdom increased, would realize the multi-faceted role of his father.

Yet it was the king's role as a commander of the army that would be most apparent. One indicator was the amount of time that the king was away from Pella on campaign. Often, as we have noted, the army had to be divided to deal with threats in areas quite remote from one another. At the same time, the role of the Macedonian army would have been ever visible at Pella, where youths from important families were trained for elite status in the army, older companions consulted with Philip about command positions delegated to them, and several companions of the king served as his guard. Councils with the most important of the king's subordinates

were held at Pella, as well as elsewhere when the army was on campaign. Military equipment was designed in Pella, and a naval force was planned there as Macedonian interests extended across the northern Aegean and into the Propontis and Black Sea. Embassies arrived at Pella with increasing frequency as the army's successes mounted.

If a son of an Argead king had hopes of succeeding his father, he would acknowledge the military base of the kingdom, striving to achieve the qualities required to ensure the strength of this base. He would need the regard of his father's men as well as that of the king's boys of approximately his own age, whose support was crucial in the acclamation of a new king. He would appreciate the need for the promise of sound leadership to win the approval of all of the Macedonian army, ordinary foot-soldiers as well as the elite companions. However, more than promise was necessary; a potential successor must have demonstrated his ability in the field. Philip became king largely because the son of the previous king – Philip's brother, slain in battle by the Illyrians – was an infant. An astute king would provide his son(s) with opportunities to show his (their) capabilities at a relatively young age. Philip was astute and Alexander was given opportunities to demonstrate his abilities.

Certain personal qualities, then, were essential. But it was also necessary to be a member of the Argead line, whose tradition of leadership extended back to the late sixth century according to reliable sources and much earlier if the Macedonian remembrance of its first kings is at all sound. The strength of the Argead right to rule is shown by the reluctance on the part of the successors of Alexander to depart from the tradition. While a group of powerful men craved rule on Alexander's death, they acclaimed the yet unborn child of Alexander and Roxane, should the child be a boy, while the army assembly acclaimed Philip III Arrhidaios, the other son of Philip by his Thessalian wife Philinna. As Roxane's son, Alexander IV, could not be expected to govern in his own right for many years and Philip III was regarded as enfeebled, real command

rested in the hands of others, but the Argead claim to kingship could not be quickly ignored.

To be an Argead enhanced one's ancestry inasmuch as Herakles was the progenitor of the family. A more suitable first Argead would be difficult to name, in light of the heroic quality of Macedonian kingship and of the nearly Herakleian tasks that accompanied the rule of Macedon. Alexander demonstrated this link regularly in sacrifices (e.g. Arrian I.11.7–8, at the start of the campaign; II.24.6, at Tyre; VI.3.2, in India). Moreover, he not only emulated the hero but, as Arrian records, "he had a sense of rivalry with him as well as with the hero Perseus who was also an ancestor" (III.3.2). His mother's lineage added another impressive ancestor, Neoptolemos the son of Achilles who was the mightiest warrior at Troy. At our distance, we may discount the validity of the genuineness of belief in such a lineage, but in dismissing it we would be doing great disservice to the views of ancient Macedonians and Greeks as well.

More than heroic ancestry, the Argeads' ties with the gods buttressed the royal role in Macedonian religion. Kings offered sacrifices on behalf of the Macedonians, and they established festivals and games that required special constructions such as theaters, temples, and proper sites for holding the athletic contests. The older center of the kingdom at Aigai had a theater and temple of Eukleia; Dion had a sanctuary of Demeter dating back to the sixth century. It is not improbable that the ruling king also supplied the offerings and implements for sacrificial occasions. What better god to claim as ancestor than Zeus, father of men and gods? As Arrian reflects, like the legendary Minoan kings Minos, Aiakos, and Radamanthys, Alexander traced his origin to Zeus (VII.29.3). So might he have signs from Zeus, such as the thunder and rain that came as a token of where he was to build a temple to Olympian Zeus at Sardis (I.17.6). As in the case of belief in heroic ancestry, we should be willing to accept the proposition that Argead kings believed that they were empowered by the great gods.

Illustrious ancestry was a boon of Argead association. On the other hand, Argead status carried real dangers. Over the two

hundred years or so of Argead kingship, many branches had formed on the original single trunk: thus successors could come from several families and rivalry between those families was often bloody. On the death of Perdikkas II, members of three branches held the rule for short times. A ruling king might well be insecure and a potential successor would have grounds to recognize dangers to his own life. Another trait as early as the reign of Alexander I was multiple marriage. Philip's father, Amyntas III, had two wives, each of whom bore sons. One of Philip II's first tasks on succession was dealing with his half-brothers. Philip himself had seven wives. By the time of his murder, there were two adult sons – Alexander III and Philip III; however, his recent bride was expecting a child. Although Alexander was promptly acclaimed, there were potentially two threats to his tenure from within his immediate family. That Alexander recognized the threat to his chances of succession is evident in Macedonian relations with a satrap of Persian Karia, Pixodaros, who in 336 offered an alliance with Macedon, to be cemented by marriage between his daughter and Philip's son Philip III Arrhidaios. Learning of this offer, Alexander sent a messenger of his own to Pixodaros urging that the satrap consider Alexander rather than Arrhidaios as a proper son-in-law. Philip's anger at Alexander's interference prevented the conclusion of the marriage, but its implications had been frightening to his would-be successor (Plutarch, *Alexander* X.1–3).

The presence and the power of women in the Argead line would become apparent to a child growing up in the residential area of the palace. Important women were guarantees of treaty agreements through marriage into the royal Macedonian family, since they derived from influential families in other kingdoms or states. While their official position was to bear sons to succeed to the throne and daughters to secure alliances, their influence could determine the future of Macedonian governance. Alexander III might enjoy better prospects if Philip III happened to be incapacitated, a condition that Olympias was reputed to have caused. In turn, Alexander might have been the target of Philip III's mother. Security was a real

problem for an Argead, especially the son of a king. The reactions of a potential successor would likely be balanced between admiration for his mother's abilities and, perhaps, some revulsion at the self-centered, often ruthless actions she performed.

Filial bonds, consequently, not only were essential to the success of a particular son of a king but also heightened the importance of lineage. Early ancestors remained important but new familial ties through marriage could provide other distinguished predecessors. Marriage was an obvious means of expanding one's family, but adoption was another. When Alexander restored Queen Ada as rightful ruler of Karia, their relationship mirrored that of family members: Alexander addressed Ada as mother and she adopted him as her son and successor (Arrian I.23.7–8).

It is likely that the environment of the palace would encourage a young Argead male to search for friendship elsewhere. One clue to the source of his close friends is the period of education that Alexander had with Aristotle. At the sanctuary of the Nymphs near Mieza, Alexander was instructed along with several youths near his own age including Ptolemaios, son of Lagos; Kassandros, son of Antipatros; Marsyas of Pella, who wrote a treatise on Alexander's education that, unhappily, is lost; Hephaistion, described by Arrian as most loved of all men by Alexander (VII.14.3); and perhaps also Perdikkas and Lysimachos. That friendship could endure is evident in the appointment of Ptolemaios and Hephaistion as members of Alexander's guard when the Macedonians had survived their trek across the Gedrosian desert. Other evidence exists in the continuing relationship with those friends from Alexander's youth who had been exiled on Alexander's account following the quarrel between Philip II and his son in 337: Ptolemaios, Harpalos, Erigyios and his brother, Laomedon, from Mytilene on the island of Lesbos, and Nearchos son of Androtimos, who came from Crete to aid Philip. Harpalos was given important financial command in Babylon by Alexander and he outlived his king; Nearchos rose to become admiral of the fleet that sailed from India into the Persian Gulf and also survived after Alexander's death; Erigyios commanded the allied cavalry at

Gaugamela, and later led a force sent to deal with the Persian leader in Areia in central Asia; Ptolemaios was one of the most successful of Alexander's survivors; Hephaistion predeceased his king, but through illness, not on the orders of the king for disloyalty.

Trusted friends were vital and bravery could move newcomers into the circle of the closest comrades. Crowns for bravery awarded at Susa in 324 went to both Peukestas and Leonnatos, along with awards to friends of longer standing (VII.5.4–6). Krateros, too, became especially trusted by Alexander, who held this man who had served under Philip as equal to his own self (VII.12.3). The genuineness of the devotion of such friends was demonstrated in their selfless acts of courage on behalf of their king.

At the same time, friendship could end. Charges that Alexander was claiming too much glory for himself ended the life of Kleitos the Black, who had saved Alexander's life at the Granikos River. The threat of a conspiracy against his life led Alexander to find guilty not only Philotas, one of his guard, but also Parmenion, Philotas' father whom Philip had regarded as his most capable aid. Friendships were crucial but they were fragile.

By 336 Alexander III of Macedon had reached his twentieth year, having received proper training to rule as leader of the Macedonian army, which was the most important tool for the preservation of a strong, unified kingdom. He had avoided the dangers of intrigue against his succession; impairment by physical accident or through the designs of someone else; and rejection by Philip himself as heir. His mother had ensured his survival through infancy, and his father had set a course of education to prepare Alexander as a possible heir. Much of the education was physical, conditioned by the tough nature of Macedonia, by long-established traditions such as the ability to kill a wild boar without the use of a net, and by training to become the best of horsemen and foot-soldiers, second only to the king himself. Thus, it is possible to picture Alexander as impressive in his physical being – not necessarily especially tall or burly but rather tautly robust and lithe. His energy would be apparent in his actions and his words.

He had gained a corps of friends, some accidentally through their own training at Pella as king's boys, but others by affinity. Most of Alexander's early friends would be trustworthy aides as well as friends for the remainder of his life. We can believe that he knew the worth of such companions especially as he grew aware of dangers to his person and position. His cousin, Amyntas, had a claim to the throne through his own father, Perdikkas III: Amyntas had been too young to succeed as an effective leader when his father was killed in the Illyrian invasion of 360/59. Now, however, he was fully adult – some four years older than Alexander, and married to one of Philip's daughters. Alexander's half-brother, Philip III Arrhidaios, was another contender. What is more, Philip's most recent wife, Kleopatra, was expecting a child. Since this wife belonged to an important Macedonian lineage, a son could well supplant Alexander as Philip's choice as successor, since Philip, of course, did not anticipate that he would be murdered before the child was born or even before the child had reached the second decade of life. Alexander could well be anxious for his future.

That anxiety might carry over to the security of the kingdom of Macedon. Alexander had constant opportunities to gain awareness of this: the army was active throughout the entire year, Pella was alive with planning for war, and envoys regularly arrived to bargain. The enlargement of the kingdom was very recent. The Greeks had been defeated only two years earlier and the League of Corinth had existed but a single year. Old enemies were never fully pacified, and even the kingdoms of upper Macedonia might assert their independence.

Can we propose any inner emotions of Alexander III at this point in time? Perhaps a safe claim is to acknowledge his ambition to succeed Philip, believing he was fit to assume the responsibilities it entailed. Knowing that his ancestors included Zeus, Herakles, and Achilles as well as Philip would have buoyed belief in his fitness. This positive assessment was likely to be somewhat muted by anxiety for his own safety and recognition of the monumentality of the tasks he would assume, should he survive. June of 336 gave rise

to these competitive emotions: Philip was assassinated at a celebration of another dynastic marriage in which Alexander's sister Kleopatra was married to her maternal uncle, King Alexander of Epiros. On the second day of festivities, a grand procession headed by statues of the 12 Olympians together with one of Philip inaugurated the games arranged for this day. When Philip himself entered the theater at Aigai, he was stabbed by one of his bodyguards and he died quickly. Following the immediate confusion, Antipatros, second in power to Philip, presented Alexander to the army assembly, whose members acclaimed him their king.

Initial Consolidation of Royal Power

The nature of Macedonian kingship presented two major challenges to a new king. Times of transition, especially when a king had been murdered, sent waves not only within the kingdom but throughout its extent. And, by 336, that extent had been greatly expanded. First Alexander must demonstrate that he was the proper Argead to rule, something that would be more easily achieved were there few or no rivals. Shortly after the murder of Philip, his latest wife Kleopatra and her infant son were put to death, probably on the orders of Olympias, as was his cousin Amyntas, who may have been inveigling with the Greeks to gain the kingship. Philip III Arrhidaios was allowed to live.

A second and the essential way to prove his fitness to rule was through his own prowess as a commander without the assistance of his father. The death of Philip sparked uprisings in tribal frontier areas as well as in Greece. So Alexander led the army Thrace-ward to the territory of the Triballi and Illyrians and then into that of the independent Thracians (Arrian I.1.4–7), who launched carts at the Macedonians as they were climbing the sheer slope of the mountain. To attack the Getai required crossing in one night the Ister (Danube), the greatest of rivers (Arrian I.3.5). Familiarity with the Macedonian rivers and mountains with their narrow passes had



Figure 7.2 The Petra Pass. Photograph by Richard R. Johnson

been good training for the newly acclaimed commander of the force.

Dealing with the Greeks also required military action. Revolt in Thebes while the army was occupied in the northeast instigated a rapid return to Pella and thence into central Greece. Thebes was besieged, taken, and virtually destroyed. It is noteworthy that Alexander spared the house of Pindar (Arrian I.9.10) while he eliminated the physical entity that had been one of the leading poleis of Classical Greece. Greek culture was valuable and should be preserved; the independent polity was uncontrollable, thus expendable. A Macedonian king's role in the Greek world now also demanded administrative savoir faire inasmuch as Philip II had been Thessalian *tagos*, a member of the Delphic Amphiktyonic Council, and *hegemon* of the League of Corinth. His son assumed these positions along with treaty rights that had been forged by Philip. The continuation of the League entailed an obligation, again a legacy from Philip, to undertake war against the Persians.

After visiting Delphi and its oracle, Alexander returned to Pella to prepare for that obligation. Training his force, organizing sup-

plies, readying ships for the crossing into Anatolia, naming a regent to control the full extent of the kingdom were joined by another march northward toward the Danube: the foray would be useful practice for the troops and test the machinery of war, while success would hopefully lighten the regent's task. All the objectives were achieved.

Further pacification of traditional enemies provided another incentive for undertaking the charge of the League of Corinth. The recognition that a standing army was crucial to the very existence of a Macedonian kingdom entailed an understanding that the army must be employed in its natural task. If the enlarged kingdom did not require constant attention, the army could exercise its skills further afield. Second, the use of special military units from the recently incorporated territories would not only extend the range of the Macedonian force but deprive potentially restive portions of the kingdom of some of their means to revolt against Macedonian control. The Thessalian cavalry that fought brilliantly under Alexander's leadership against the Persians (Arrian III.15.3) could not aid a Thessalian uprising against the regent. The 7,000 Greek troops from the League of Corinth were removed from sources of potential discord in southern Greece while Alexander and his army were advancing against the Persians. Nor could the Agrianian archers and other tribal levies aid their once-independent leaders.

In light of his inheritance, his relatively smooth succession, and initial successes in dealing with uprisings on the part of components of the kingdom, we may attribute a sense of confidence to the 22-year-old king as he prepared to continue his father's attack on Persia. His confidence was strengthened by knowledge of recent events in Persia: in 338 the Achaemenid king, Artaxerxes III, had been murdered by a "trusted" advisor Bagoas, who established a son of the murdered king as Artaxerxes IV while proceeding to purge the other royal sons. Two years later, the puppet Artaxerxes along with his own children was killed by the same advisor, and a cousin of Artaxerxes III succeeded to the throne, again through the efforts of Bagoas and the fact that few other candidates were still alive. We have noted,

in chapter 5, that occasions of succession regularly produced uprisings in parts of the vast empire. These three years of purges and unsteady central control would have provided an excellent opportunity for revolt or for the success of an invading force.

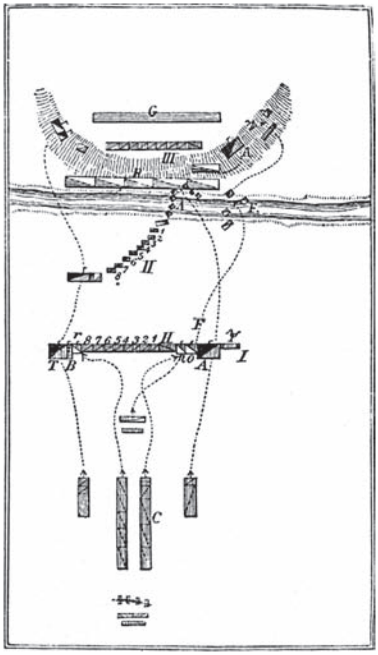
First-hand information about the nature of the Persians was available to Alexander in several forms. Greek sources included written accounts. Herodotos had spent his youth in the Greek polis of Halikarnassos in Asia Minor when it was under Persian control, and later he had visited as least some parts of the Persian Empire in the course of his inquiries for writing of the Persian Wars. Xenophon's *Anabasis* recounted the adventures and misadventures of himself and other Greek mercenaries hired to replace Great King Artaxerxes II with his younger brother Kyros. The Greek physician to the Achaemenids wrote 23 books on Persian history, now lost but for fragments, while Khoirilos of Samos recounted the tribal groups that had crossed the Hellespont with the Persian migrants. Word of mouth offered other information. A satrap of the territory of the old Assyrian center took refuge from his Achaemenid ruler following an abortive uprising: together with his family, Artabazos lived for 10 years at Pella. It is noteworthy that two Greek brothers entrusted with important naval commands by Dareios III were related to Artabazos by marriage. Alexander's tutor, Aristotle, had spent some years in the small kingdom of Atarneos in the Troad. Its "philosopher-king" Hermias was suspected of collusion with enemies of Persia (as we have suggested, perhaps Philip of Macedon), and was put to death on the orders of Artaxerxes III. Envoys, too, traveled between Pella and the Persian capitals. Yet another important source of information was the reconnaissance of scouts, an important element of the Macedonian army from the time of Philip if not earlier. Finally, there are several similarities between the two kingdoms: both were monarchies with a centralized administration; they were extensive in territorial size and population by comparison with the Greek poleis; multiple cultures were drawn together by initial conquest and held, more or less tightly, by a strong military. These similar characteristics produced many of the

same problems for the kings of both realms. We will return to the likenesses in examining the nature of Alexander's efforts to weld the two kingdoms into a single empire.

The Campaign

Alexander's brilliant generalship is not disputed. In the summary of his study *The Generalship of Alexander the Great* Major General J. F. C. Fuller begins with the category "As Genius." We will not deny that genius if we argue that it was, in many respects, predictable. He possessed the legacy of his father's work: a honed, loyal standing army and a staff of seasoned superior officers. The recruitment of future subordinates through the training of aristocratic youth at Pella had already produced men of Alexander's own age who could eventually replace the older men. While that army, and its commanders, derived from a variety of backgrounds and military tactics, the units operated as a single unit. Even though Alexander's force included mercenaries, they accounted for only a seventh of the total (or an eighth, depending on the full complement of the force). The great majority were bound to Alexander through his kingship, leadership of the League of Corinth, and treaty alliances. Furthermore, Philip had expanded the production of military equipment to include siege machinery and catapults capable of hurling stones weighing as much as 50 pounds (over 22 kg).

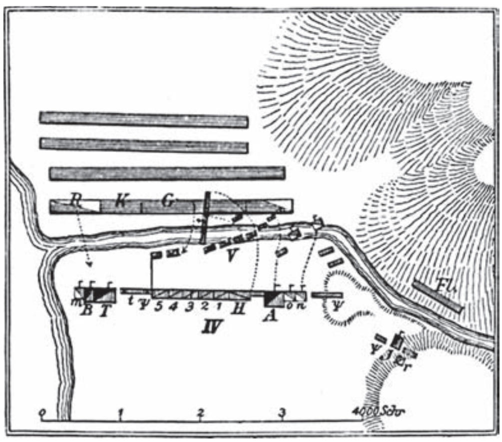
The education that the Macedonians, including Alexander, had received from the land of Macedonia also contributed to Alexander's genius. The major battles fought and won by the Macedonians under Alexander's command often took place at rivers. In the first encounter at the Granikos in northwestern Anatolia Alexander, riding his totemic steed Bucephalas, led his army across the river to charge up the opposite bank, along which the Persian force was arrayed. The battle of Issos found the two forces on either side of the Pinaros River; again the Macedonians, with Alexander leading, charged across the river. Although Gaugamela lacked the element of



The Roman numerals I, II, III represent the order of battle
I Formation
II Attack
III Subsequent attack on Greek mercenary infantry
The Arabic numbers 1–8 indicate the Heavy Infantry divisions

C	Approach of Macedonian army
T	Thessalian cavalry
B	Allied (Greek) cavalry
r	Thracian cavalry
n and o	Light infantry
H	Foot Guards
F	Division of cavalry and light infantry sent to attack Persian left flank
ψ	Agrianian and other archers and light troops
A	Alexander's heavy cavalry
R	Persian cavalry
G	Greek mercenary infantry

Figure 7.3 Battle of the Granikos. *Source*: J. P. Mahaffy, *Alexander's Empire*, London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1887, Il. 1, p. 13



The Roman numerals IV and V indicate the two final stages of the battle at Issos

T	Thessalian cavalry
B	Allied (Greek) cavalry
r	Thracian cavalry
n and o	Light infantry
H	Foot Guards
ψ	Agrianian and other archers and light troops
A	Alexander's heavy cavalry
R	Persian cavalry
G	Greek mercenary infantry
Fl	Flanking divisions of both Persians and Macedonians on the hills
J	Cavalry
K	Position of the Persian king

Scale: 4000 schritt = 3012.8 meters or 2753.7 (non-metric) yards

Figure 7.4 Battle of Issos. *Source*: J. P. Mahaffy, *Alexander's Empire*, London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1887, Il. 3, p. 25

a river, it was necessary to cross the Tigris with its swift current (Arrian III.7.5). The Macedonian defeat of the Indian force under Poros required intricate knowledge of the monsoon-swollen Hydaspes River. After this initial success, the Macedonians traveled south along the length of the Indos to its mouth on the Arabian Sea in vessels that Alexander had ordered constructed for him. Arrian reports that Alexander himself first explored the two mouths of the Indos and then, with a portion of his cavalry, spent three days exploring the coast in advance of the sea voyage of a portion of the Macedonians from India to the head of the Persian Gulf. Knowledge of the importance of waterways for communication and unification gained was a valuable by-product of his Macedonian heritage.

Macedonia also taught him well how to deal with mountains, essential to the successful campaigning in central Asia. At the citadel



Figure 7.5 Indos River at the junction of Indos and Gilgit rivers. The Himalayas are shown ending in the east and Karakorams in the north. Photograph by and courtesy of Prof. Daniel Waugh

of Sogdiana in Bactria, Alexander discovered that it was sheer on all sides and covered with snow and that those holding the citadel were well provisioned for a long siege. Even so, he determined to attack. His enemy shouted down that he should find some winged solders if he hoped to succeed. He found 300 such men, who fixed iron pegs into the snow and with the aid of the pegs made their climb at night. Only 30 were said to have perished. When the occupants of the heights saw these winged soldiers at dawn, they surrendered (Arrian IV.18.5–19.4). Later his Macedonians succeeded in capturing the rock of Aornos, the site that had once held out against the mighty Herakles (Arrian IV.30.1–4).

In addition to the skills developed by service in Macedonia, Macedonian soldiers had gained considerable skill in siege. When his engineers calculated that the height of the Gaza fortifications was too great for siege engines to be effective, Alexander disagreed. Gaza was taken with the aid of those engines (Arrian II.25.2). Ordinary soldiers too were practiced in siege: at Sangala in India, even before any part of the wall was battered by engines, the Macedonians began to undermine it (Arrian V.24.4).

Macedonian leaders appreciated the value of those who had acclaimed them kings. Pressures on the core of the kingdom were constant and existed on every border. Soldiers trained to withstand and, hopefully, prevail over Illyrian, Thracian, Greek, and other incursions were the key to the integrity of the realm. These potential soldiers were raised in conditions that honed their physical fitness: shepherds moving flocks from lower winter pastures to summer pastures in the mountains; hunters of wild beasts; farmers. Such men could be doughty warriors and a wise ruler would appreciate the value of his Macedonian men-at-arms. When Alexander sought to press eastward in India, his Macedonians described their weary longing for family and their homeland (Arrian VI.27.2–9). Alexander believed that they would change their collective mind but, when that did not happen, he made it clear to the army that he had decided to turn back.

The middling location of Macedonia – its proximity and its attractions for others – offered further insight for the Persian cam-

paign. Isolation from others was impossible. Consequently, gaining familiarity with likely enemies would be an important asset. As we have sketched above, Alexander watched the expansion of the territory of Macedon and of the increasing interaction with other peoples. Plutarch reports that when Alexander was very young he conversed with envoys from the Persian king while Philip was away. Supposedly, his questions were about road systems, the king's character, and the numbers of the Persian troops. Even if this report is not accurate, Pella had become a hive of international activity during Alexander's childhood. His world extended beyond the traditional Macedonian sphere.

Surely this is essential knowledge for one who had to deal with other cultures, perhaps even in ways that are intelligible to those cultures. Philip had learned the nature and value of Greek institutions as his control extended further south in Greece. Not only did he assume certain official Greek positions but he created new organizations on Greek models. Alexander inherited these positions and organizations and, as he was successful in the Persian Empire, he involved himself in the Persian structure as well. Indications of Alexander's grasp of this knowledge come in the form of maintaining existing institutions – satrapies and satraps, the vast machinery of treasury and recording at Babylon. He also appointed natives to positions of authority in newly conquered regions – for instance, friendship with Artabazos, who had earlier taken refuge in Pella, kept Artabazos and his sons in honorable positions in the new scheme of governance of the Persian Empire (Arrian III.23.7). In doing so, Alexander mirrored similar actions of Philip: Greek states continued to possess their polis way of life, albeit under the oversight of Macedon; the royal family of Epiros continued to rule the kingdom under the same oversight. Loyal Persians might expect their own fortunes to be comparable.

On the other hand, too great a leaning away from the Macedonian "way of life" could be dangerous, as we have seen in the case of the feelings of Alexander's companion Kleitos. When the man who had saved Alexander's life at the Granikos accused his king of taking excessive credit for success on his own part, he died by

the hand of Alexander. Later Alexander was forced to alter his plan to march eastward in India when his Macedonians refused to continue. It is worth remembering that while the Greek contingent in Alexander's army was released at Ecbatana in 330, no such offer was extended to the Macedonian troops.

To repeat, his inheritance does not fully explain Alexander's success: nothing in his training had prepared him to reckon with elephants; the administrative structure of Pella was simple by comparison with that he found at Babylon; no Macedonian road was as long or as conducive to rapid travel as the Persian royal road. Major and quick adaptation of his tools was essential. His success at doing so is a measure of his own impressive abilities.

Can we see into Alexander's mind as he was adjusting to the circumstances of the vast empire during the 10-year campaign? Did he exchange his Macedonian kingship for the status of Great King of Persia? The evidence indicates that he did not. To be sure, he added Persian military units to his army: Indian mercenaries (Arrian IV.27.3), 20,000 Persian soldiers as well as Kossaians and Tarpurians (Arrian VII.23.1), cavalry composed of the sons of important Persians (Arrian VII.6.4–5) and 30,000 Persian youths. The incorporation of foreign corps was a regular practice of both Philip and Alexander in preparation for the campaign. Moreover, the new recruits were trained in the Macedonian military tradition in what may have been a version of the training in Pella of the sons of Macedonian aristocratic families (Arrian VII.23.6.1 and VII.23.3–4). Nor did the retention of Persian officials cause a lessening role for Alexander's own subordinates. Loyal subordinates whose relationship with Alexander stretched back into childhood rose to positions of ever greater importance. At Susa in 324, these companions were joined even more closely to their Argead king through the instrument utilized by Amyntas III and Philip II, namely marriage. Through Alexander's and Hephaistion's marriage to sisters, their children would be cousins (Arrian VII.4.5). But the word "loyal" must be emphasized; disloyal subordinates, whatever their ethnicity, would be punished, often by death. As Macedonian king,

Alexander was fully aware of his precarious position long before he sat on the throne of the Achaemenids, who had the same fear of traitors and rivals.

We should consider Alexander's marriages in the light of his possible Persianization. At Susa, he took as wives one of the daughters of Dareios III and a daughter of the previous king, Artaxerxes IV. He had previously married Roxane, daughter of the Bactrian leader Oxyartes. One lasting friendship, with Barsine, a daughter of Artabazos, who was a coeval of Alexander and had spent some ten years in Pella with her satrap father and the rest of the family, was renewed in Asia. Some sources report that a son of Barsine and Alexander bore the name Herakles. There were no marriage ties to Macedonia. Remembering Philip's wives, however, puts the role of Argead marriage into proper focus: of Philip's seven marriages only one – made in 337 – was with a Macedonian woman. The other six were guarantors of alliances, even if some produced genuine affection. Had Alexander lived to the age of 45 – the age of Philip in 337 – he is likely to have married several more times, perhaps even to a noble Macedonian woman.

Surely the still youthful conqueror would be immensely proud of his accomplishment. Did he become delusional, believing that he was more than human? Why at the end of his campaign would he send an order to the Greeks that he should be worshiped as a god, as some of the sources report? Perhaps it was due to the assumption of the role of Great King of Persia. On the other hand, an intimate association with heroes and even great gods was customary for Macedonian kings before Alexander. Consider the expenditure of precious time to cross the 370 miles (600 km) of desert to the oracle of Ammon in western Egypt to "learn more accurate knowledge of himself" (Arrian III.3.2) From childhood, Alexander was taught to appreciate his lineage, extending back to several heroes – Herakles, Perseus, and Achilles – but also to Olympian Zeus. By his deeds, he had demonstrated his kinship with the heroes, and by his regular sacrifices he revealed his reliance on Zeus' good will. As early as the fifth century, Herodotos knew that the oracle of Ammon

was also an oracle of Zeus (II.55). We have argued that the views of the ancients deserve respect, even if they seem outlandish in the twenty-first century CE. Would a Macedonian king not perform the traditional acts to seek the favor of the father of men and gods even in Egypt? Having acquired Egypt without battle, he would soon lead his men back into territory not likely to be so easy to take. Egypt had only been reattached to the Persian Empire 10 years earlier, after nearly 60 years of independence; regions of the Levant were scenes of sporadic uprisings. To secure the ongoing good will of Zeus-Ammon was essential. What other Egyptian oracle was so linked to Zeus? Zeus remained a helpful aide to Alexander all the way to India and then back to Babylon. With their growing success, both Philip and Alexander exhibited their impressive ancestry and did so in rather exuberant fashion: we remember that Philip had his own image carried together with those of the 12 Olympians.

The Empire of Alexander

Schemes of periodization often use Alexander as the start of a new age: beginning in 336 or perhaps 323 the Classical Hellenic Age yields to the Hellenistic era. Greeks, Greek culture and language, even Greek poleis continue but they are enfolded in something larger and not altogether hellenic. To determine the correctness of this scheme, let us consider the nature of the empire that Alexander had created and had begun to organize. How greatly had he departed from his Macedonian heritage?

It is obvious that the amalgamation of the Macedonian and Persian realms produced a new state, something that the Persians under kings Dareios I and Xerxes I had attempted in the early fifth century but had failed to achieve. During Alexander's lifetime, few of the existing structures of either realm was changed; he employed the tools of both. As commander of the Macedonian army, he was inextricably committed to reliance on the force that had proved so successful. To the advance force of c. 10,000 infantry and 1,000

cavalry dispatched to Anatolia by Philip, Alexander added another 30,000 infantry and 5,000 cavalry. These troops were primarily Macedonians, Macedonian subjects, or Greeks, both members of the League of Corinth and mercenaries. As control over once-Persian lands expanded, troops from Persia were incorporated into the army. In other words, the practice was continued of strengthening the security of the territory under Macedonian rule through a standing army composed of men from all regions. Their training was in the Macedonian military fashion.

In succeeding to the kingship, Alexander was obligated to begin hostilities with the Great King of Persia through Philip's announcement of the charge to the League of Corinth, a history of fear of Persian expansion westward shared by Macedonians and Greeks, and the necessity of providing employment for the vital tool of Macedonian existence. But need Alexander advance beyond Asia Minor into lands where there were few Greeks to be freed from Persian overlordship? Two motives seem likely. First, Macedonian expansion from the fifth century on, especially during the reign of Philip II, presents an underlying image: the coherence of lower and upper Macedonia brought threats from more distant peoples, for example Illyrians and Greeks, just as Macedonian activity in the Black Sea raised the enmity of Anatolian Persia. A second motive was surely the existence of good opportunities as, for instance, in Egypt, which regularly smarted for return of its independence from Persian control.

In addition to military strength, Alexander engaged other means of unifying the vast territory. He established garrisons in regions not fully pacified that were vital to communication, in already or recently fortified citadels, and in association with major settlements. Some were temporary but others were permanent. There is little departure from the practice of previous Argead kings. Alexander was enthusiastic about creating new settlements that were more than military garrisons. Seventy such foundations are attributed to him but only twenty-five or so are certainly known. Some were refoundations; others were new; some were royal residences converted into cities. A recognition of the value of royal foundations was instilled

early into a potential successor. In 340, for instance, Alexander led a force northward to deal with a rebellion of the Maidi and, on capturing the rebels' center, he refounded it as Alexandropolis, echoing Philip's several sites named Philipopolis and one named Philippoi.

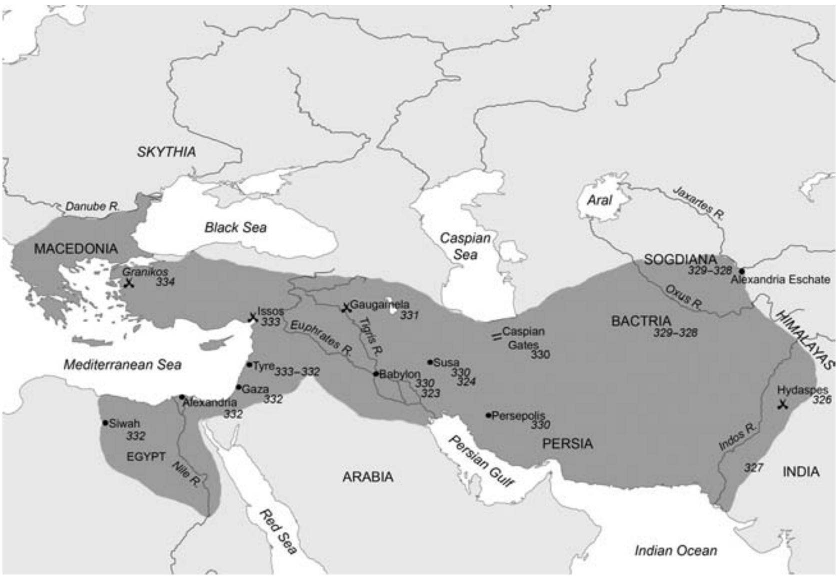
The practice is indicative of the Macedonian governance: monarchies require administrative and economic centers, but they do not easily tolerate autonomous states within their territories. A decision to establish a secure center for Argead control was taken in the late fifth century, and we have stressed the likely intensification of activity at Pella from 359 to 336. Alexandria in Egypt is similar to Pella in its protected setting on a river removed from the seacoast, planned nature, and the union of royal residence with the machinery of governance.

Philip and Alexander were not compelled to erase all earlier settlements. Corinth was strategically located and a valuable center of production and trade. Those features could argue for its continuation, but as a meeting place for members of the king's League. The elaborate bureaus of accountancy centered in Babylon were essential for management of an empire, be it under an Achaemenid or an Argead king.

Alexander became both Great King of Persia and *basileus* of the Macedonians (and others). He also added new official positions to his repertoire in succeeding the Pharaohs of Egypt, in making alliances with some, in becoming the adopted son of a ruler, and through marriage with important families in the newly conquered lands. No earlier Argead king had been Great King of Persia, but Philip had demonstrated well the value of accumulating a variety of official positions in his own being.

Can a similar link with earlier Macedonian tradition be argued for the culture of the "new" age? Do the distinctive elements of earlier Macedonia vanish with the use of Greek language and culture as a thread offering some form of unity in the hugely diverse environment of Alexander's empire? It cannot be denied that Alexander's success was the foundation for developments following

his early death. The outcome of the struggle for succession was the kingdoms of the Hellenistic Age, not a Macedonistic or neo-Persian Empire. But the interaction of Greek and Macedonian elements was not new; our consideration of earlier interaction between Greece and Macedonia has led to a conclusion that the adoption of Greek language, religion, customs, and institutions was well established before the reign of Alexander. In fact, his father's reliance on Greek aides is good testimony – not only human assistants but divine partners as well. Alexander was educated by Aristotle, he was supported by Zeus. Certainly, the hellenism of Macedonia was entwined with older Macedonian customs and beliefs: thus the cultural bond of the new empire of Alexander was a Macedonian brand of hellenism. By the early years of the successor kingdoms in Egypt, Asia, and Macedonia itself, the two cultures had grown even closer. That closeness presupposes a longer period of interaction than the 32-year lifetime of Alexander III.



Map 7.1 Alexander's empire

None of the description of the impact made by the conditions of the world into which Alexander was born and which served to mold his life is intended to diminish his ability and accomplishment. The interaction between society and individual members is mutual, so that the rules and structures of a culture set boundaries, on the one hand, but individual reactions to existing conditions can effect significant changes, on the other. Some people have more impact on their worlds than others. Alexander belongs in the first category.

Appreciating the nature of his several worlds enhances our understanding of this dynamic young man whose thoughts and emotions are hidden from us. The influences of the Macedonian physical environment, his status as a member of the Argead ruling line, and his training to be a potential successor to Philip II combined to produce a youth driven to excel everyone. His body had to be absolutely fit, his mind trained in every task of leadership for quick, wise response. Ancestors that included Herakles, Achilles, and even Zeus would provide some assurance that he would succeed. Accomplishing heroic deeds of his own as great or greater than those of his ancestors might well have deepened his belief that his status was special. The tasks awaiting him on the murder of his father were defined: traditional enemies must learn immediately that the new king intended to maintain the kingship he inherited, but also he must act in the charge of war against Persia. In addition to the tasks, he had inherited the necessary tools: an excellent military force and knowledge of the enemy's present condition.

As the Macedonians moved deeper into Persian territory, he discovered that Macedon and Persia had several common qualities and thus the two states might become a single realm under a single ruler. Both vested power in a king, and while the administrative apparatus of Macedon did not match that of Persia, division of responsibility was increasing in Macedon. Even earlier, Argead kings made treaties and alliances in their names, and Philip had assumed official positions in territories brought under Macedonian control. Alexander was expanding the established Macedonian practice. Not

everyone agreed with the blending; dissenters could not be tolerated. The elimination of perceived threats was second nature to any Macedonian king. The legacy served him sufficiently well that he could advance further and further into the Persian Empire and, if he had been able to persuade his Macedonians, well beyond its eastern limits.

Sources describe various plans that Alexander had formulated after his return to Babylon in 324. However, his death the following year cut short whatever intentions he had in mind, for on his death certain leadership ended in the shuffling for power amongst his successors. It is possible, nonetheless, to sense the broad scheme of future plans. Since the Macedonian military capability had been the instrument of creating and enlarging the kingdom, the army would have remained the essential tool, and its form would have been Macedonian even though non-Macedonians were added to its complement. Portions of the military would have been stationed in garrisons, but the core would have been mobile in enforcing the cohesion of the realm and in expanding its borders. The king himself or, when division was necessary, a trusted companion would have led the force. Acclaimed by the army assembly, Alexander would have understood the need to be one of the army, leading directly, knowing the names of his comrades, holding councils with his chief subordinates as well as carousing and hunting with them on a regular basis, and directing religious ceremonies. Surely Zeus and other major deities would not have been replaced by Ahura-Mazda. In all these capacities he – and they – recognized Alexander's superiority, demonstrated by his understanding of tactics and strategy as well as his brilliance in combat.

In addition to the military base, Alexander would sustain existing centers and establish new foundations as he had done in the early years of his reign. They supplied the administrative needs that Pella filled in Macedon and that Babylon, Susa, and Ecbatana contributed to the Persian Empire. Moreover, they could cement the diverse cultural mix of the new realm, again a function of the centers in both Macedon and Persia before the two were joined.

In sum, we may best understand Alexander III of Macedon as intensely driven throughout his entire life. From birth, as a member of the ruling branch of the Argead line, his life was endangered. In fact, there were threats to the boy from within that very branch in the form of cousins and other members of his father's polygamous family. As a healthy, sane son of the king, he would have been pushed by his father to develop the skills required of a future king, while his mother, a non-Macedonian, would hone his skills in other ways as, for instance, through the choice of her kinsman Leonidas as his early trainer. From both parents, he would learn that his lineage promised that he could aspire to the accomplishments of Achilles, Herakles, Dionysos, and Zeus.

Familiarity with the nature of Macedonia and neighboring regions was essential to the defense of its borders. That nature was rough, demanding excellent physical fitness to climb mountains, ford rivers, defend narrow passes. Competition with other youths in the training at Pella was further motivation to excel if ever he hoped to win their respect as their king. Since the king's boys were of aristocratic birth, their fathers would have been skilled horsemen. So too must Alexander exceed them in horsemanship.

With the successful enlargement of the kingdom came administrative needs, another category of Alexander's education. Life in Pella would provide acquaintance with the several units, while knowledge of a king's treaty-making and assumption of multiple official positions gained through the conquest of other states derived from Philip. A further dimension was added by his later tutor Aristotle. *On Kingship*, though lost as we have noted, would have addressed theoretical aspects of governance.

Alexander was thus tested constantly in the course of his young life. When he reached early manhood, that testing took the form of official positions: serving as regent, commanding a wing of the army. A good showing would win the respect of older subordinates of the king for a youth perhaps less than half their own age. Might the boy be nearly as skilled as Philip? Might the boy push himself to be better than Philip? Surely an estimation that he might be able

to lead in ways at least akin to those of his father caused his father's men to support the army's acclamation. And that acclamation came from many who had experience of Alexander's abilities through their mutual training.

Does the first nearly two-thirds of his life allow much time for quiet, private relationships such as marriage to a woman of his own choice? No. Marriage for the Argeads was now primarily a diplomatic tool and, until his death, Philip was the agent for such marriages. Nor did the first two years of Alexander's reign demand new marriage alliances; Thrace, Greece, Illyria, Epiros were already drawn into the web of treaties cemented through marriages. Moreover, there is sound reason to suspect that the atmosphere of the domestic quarter at Pella was none too cordial. On the other hand, Alexander was capable of great love, especially for companions who had risked their own lives on his behalf, and who had followed his commands and done so competently. His relationship with the Greek/Persian Barsine – first as friend in Pella, later as mistress in Persia – is somewhat akin to his relations with his male friends. But would he have felt absolutely secure even in the embrace of these companions?

This essential, indomitable drive was the foundation of his success, and it would have been apparent in his physical presence. We cannot know whether his eyes were startlingly blue in color, but we can believe that his gaze would have held the attention of all who looked into those eyes. We do not know whether he was short or broad-shouldered, but it is certain that he was fit for any physical task. Alexander was fortunate in his circumstances. He used the product of those circumstances brilliantly.

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Greece and Macedonia

Ethnicity

Adams, W. L. 1996. Historical Perceptions of Greco-Macedonian Ethnicity in the Hellenistic Age. *Balkan Studies* 37, 205–22.

While the focus of the discussion is post-Alexander, the author perceives, rightly I believe, the importance of hellenization in the fourth century. I would argue that the "blurring of lines" was occurring even earlier.

Badian, E. 1982. Greeks and Macedonians. In B. Barr-Sharrar and E. N. Borza (eds.), *Macedonia and Greece in Late Classical and Early Hellenistic Times*. Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 33–51.

Professor Badian has published extensively and insightfully on Macedonian matters. In this essay he argues that Macedonians were not thought by others to be Greek, nor did they consider themselves to be Greek. A claim to Greek origins may have originated in the fifth or early fourth century, "a sorry time" for Macedonia.

Borza, E. N. 1996. Greeks and Macedonians in the Age of Alexander: The Source Traditions. In R. W. Wallace and E. M. Harris (eds.), *Transitions to Empire: Essays in Greco-Roman History, 360–146 B.C., in Honor of E. Badian*. Norman, OK and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 122–39.

Borza, E. N. 1999. Origins, Ethnicity, and Institutions. In *Before Alexander: Constructing Early Macedonia*. Claremont, CA: Regina Books.

In this and numerous other publications, Professor Borza solidly defends the view that Greek and Macedonian ethnicities differ from one another in most respects: language, cultural practices, material culture, societal organization, economic way of life.

Fotiadis, M. 2001. Imagining Macedonia in Prehistory, ca. 1900–1930. *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 14.2, 115–35.

In an unusual, but valuable, approach to the issues of Macedonian identity, the author maintains that the view of Macedonians as the antithesis of the Greeks emerged when research in the region expanded during the

early twentieth century. While Greeks might have passed through Macedonia, they continued south and produced a different way of life.

Hall, J. 2001. Contested Ethnicities: Perceptions of Macedon within Evolving Definitions of Greek Identity. In I. Malkin (ed.), *Ancient Perceptions of Greek Ethnicity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 159–86.

Useful picture of the ambiguities between ethnicity and the heroic claims of peoples in northern Greece upon the expanding colonization from southern Greece.

Hammond, N. G. L. and G. T. Griffith 1979. *A History of Macedonia II: 550–336* BC. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Chapter 3, part 5, discusses the influence of Greek culture, and part 6 treats the institutions of the Macedonians and their neighbors.

Promponas, I. K. 1977. MAKEDONIKA KAI OMHRIKA GLWSSA. *Archaia Makedonia* 2, 397–407.

Evidence for Greek linguistic elements in Macedonia.

Greek view of Macedonians

Connor, W. R. 1966. *Greek Orations*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Handy English translation of important orations.

Jacoby, F. 1923–58. *Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker*. Berlin: Weidman.

Saunders, A. N. (tr.) 1975. *Demosthenes and Aeschines*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Translations of the differing perspectives exemplified by Demosthenes, the bitter foe of Philip, and Aischines, who found traits to admire.

View of Persia shared by Greeks and Macedonians

Bloedow, E. 2003. Why did Philip and Alexander Launch a War against the Persian Empire? *L'Antiquité Classique* LXXII, 261–74.

I was elated and relieved to read this essay by a valued colleague and friend who argues the genuineness of common grounds for the campaign against Persia by the League of Corinth under its Macedonian hegemon.

General

Buckler, J. 2003. *Aegean Greece in the Fourth Century*. Leiden and Boston: Brill.

Full account beginning with the end of the Peloponnesian War and ending in 336 with the death of Philip II.

Ehrenberg, V. 1960. *The Greek State*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Although published in 1960, this account of the Greek state remains a standard source for the defining features of the polis as well as its structure and functions. A chapter on types of federations is valuable for developments of the fourth century and beyond.

Hansen, M. H. 2005. *The Shotgun Method: The Demography of the Classical Polis*. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press.

One of many recent studies of the Greek polis by one of the most productive scholars on the subject, both through his individual publications and through the Copenhagen Polis Centre over which he presides.

Military momentum

Dell, H. 1992. Philip and Macedonia's Northern Neighbors. In M. B. Hatzopoulos and L. D. Loukopoulos (eds.), *Philip of Macedon*. Athens: Ekdotike Athenon SA, 90–9.

Deftly and succinctly pictures the nature of the peoples inhabiting the northern extension of the Greek sphere and their interactions with reference to their role in Macedonian history.

Ellis, J. 1976. *Philip II and Macedonian Imperialism*. London: Thames and Hudson.

This treatment of the rise of Macedonian power, especially during the reign of Philip II, stresses the need for an exceptional military in order, first, to survive as an independent state and, increasingly, to control hostile neighbors. The author also reveals how the existence of such a force would determine future actions on the part of its leaders.

Hanson, V. D. 1999. *Wars of the Ancient Greeks*. Washington DC: Smithsonian Publications.

Chapter 3 of this account by a noted military historian discusses the great wars (490–362), and chapter 4 explores the second military revolution (362–336).

Marsden, E. W. 1977. Macedonian Military Machinery and its Designers under Philip and Alexander. *Archaia Makedonia* 2, 211–23.

Important essay on an essential ingredient of the success of Philip and Alexander.

Subordinates

Edson, C. 1934. The Antigonids, Heracles, and Beroea. *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 45, 213–46.

Argues the view that Antigonos came from Beroea, a stance not widely accepted although recent evidence strengthens the case: see A. B. Tataki, *Ancient Beroea: Prosopography and Society*. Melethmata 8. Athens: Research Centre for Greek and Roman Antiquity, National Hellenic Research Foundation.

Heckel, W. 1992. *The Marshals of Alexander's Empire*. London and New York: Routledge.

Provides an essential tool in a study of Alexander's subordinates. Part I treats "Old Guard," "New Men," "Casualities of the Succession" and "Boyhood Friends." Part II discusses careers within the military. It updates and serves, for non-German readers, the purpose of H. Berve's two-volume work *Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographischer Grundlage* (Munich: Beck, 1925–6).

Persia

Briant, P. 2002. *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire* (tr. by P. T. Daniels of *Histoire de l'Empire perse*. Paris: Libraire Arthème Fayard, 1996). Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.

Fullest (1,196 pages), best-documented account available, unlikely to be bettered. The author does not see serious difficulties in the empire even after Alexander had entered Anatolia. Briant has also written two accounts of Alexander: an excellent, very concise study for the French Que sais-je?

series, *Alexandre Le Grand* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1974, sixth ed. 2005) and *Alexander the Great: The Heroic Ideal* (French edition 1987; English edition, London: Thames and Hudson, 1996).

Cawkwell, G. 2005. *The Greek Wars: The Failure of Persia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Useful summary that discloses several serious flaws in the empire, such as the internal disorder that often accompanied accessions. See esp. chapter 10, "The End of the Achaemenids: Macedonia and Persia."

Cook, J. M. 1983. *The Persian Empire*. London: Schocken Books.

Account of Achaemenid Persia from its emergence through its defeat at the hands of the Macedonian army of Alexander; far more concise than Briant (2002).

Starr, C. 1973 and 1977. Greeks and Persians in the Fourth Century: A Study in Cultural Contacts before Alexander. Part I, *Iranica Antiqua* 11, 39–99; Part II, *Iranica Antigua* 12, 49–115.

Valuable examinations of the cultural relationships of the peoples facing one another across the Aegean Sea during the critical decades of the rise of Macedonia.

Xenophon

The Persian Expedition (*Anabasis*) 1972. Tr. Rex Warner, intro. G. Cawkwell. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Xenophon's account of the Greek mercenaries' participation in the contest between Artaxerxes II and his brother Kyros.

The Education of Kyros (*Cyropaideia*) 2001. Tr. H. G. Dakyns. New York: Knopf.

Description of the education of Kyros the Great that preserves information about Achaemenid culture.

Miscellaneous

Braudel, F. 2001. *Memory and the Mediterranean*. New York: Knopf.

Magnificent account of the flow of history in cultures connected by the Mediterranean Sea from prehistory to the Roman creation of its

empire, by the man who had been identified as one of the greatest historians of the twentieth century.

Diamond, J. 1997. *Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*. New York: Norton.

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